

Broadway Translations.

*"Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety."*



A. V. LUNACHARSKI

Broadway Translations

THREE PLAYS OF A. V. LUNACHARSKI

FAUST AND THE CITY
VASILISA THE WISE
THE MAGI

Translated by
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With an Introduction, and Author's Preface

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INTRODUCTION

Anatoli Vasilievich Lunacharski was born in the province of Poltava in 1876. His father was a landowner, the Lunacharskie being of semi-aristocratic squire stock, from which so many of the intelligentsia have sprung. He received a public school education at Kiev, and then passed on to the University of Zurich. It was there that his future lot was decided, in contact with other Russian emigrants, and also with Avenarius and Axelrod. From this period onward most of his time was passed in Switzerland, France, Italy, and intermittently in Russia.

From the first he was a Bolshevik, that is to say he joined the Marxian section of the Russian Social Democrats, which gained a *majority* at the Second and Third Congresses, and converted the word Bolshevik into a term of politics—the wholehoggers of Socialism—quite apart from the simple derivation of the word. He was a contributor to the first Marxian paper, *Krylia* (*Wings*). As a Bolshevik he belonged to the special group which founded and ran in the early years of this century the Marxian periodical, *Vpered* (*Forward*), amongst his collaborators being Pokróvski, Bogdánov and Gorki, instituted lectures and school courses, and generally speaking did the spadework of the revolution. He was a member of the Moscow Committee of Socialists, and was exiled to Vologda, whence he contrived to escape to Italy. In Switzerland he was one of the original editors of *Iskra* (*Spark*) up to its capture by the Mensheviks in 1906. He only returned to residence in Russia after the Revolution of 1917.

These few facts illustrate the genesis of Lunacharski's inspiration. He knows Italy and France thoroughly, he is filled with the love of the medieval homes of learning, and places many of his dreams in

Æsthetics," "Revolutionary Silhouettes" and "Literary Silhouettes." This series of short essays includes attacks on the intelligentsia, and polemics, as well as less occasional productions, such as "Culture Under Capitalism," "Ideas in Masks," "Science, Art and Religion," "An Introduction to the History of Religion." He is always attracted and interested in the problem of religion, ranging himself to-day with what is called the anti-religious movement in modern Russia, which we should rather call an iconoclastic determination to have a secular State, with religion entirely a private matter of taste, not to be inculcated by any organ of State.

Lunacharski is also a great authority on music and the theatre, and all through his plays, especially those in verse, one feels the unwritten score resonant in it. *The Magi* and *Vasilisa* will in fact soon be staged as operas. He has also written on music of the Western European composers, and on the Russian, among his writings on the theatre may be mentioned "The Problem of the Revolutionary Repertory." He is shortly to publish a long book on æsthetics, and he has published criticisms on pictorial art. All of these again are tinged with the same consequential Marxist flavour. It is Positivism at its highest, the Service of Mankind.

Thus Lunacharski, like Blok and his contemporaries, though differently, expresses the mysticism of a formally atheist creed. This is clearest expressed in *The Magi*, but it pervades them all, even *Oliver Cromwell* and *Thomas Campanella*, historical plays. Life, he has said, must have an Emerald or Form. He has also said, "In Literature we must adhere to the romantic school, in music to the so called mighty atom, in painting to the school of movement—Repin and Surikov, and in drama to Ostrovski."

Such are his equipments for great drama. At the age of 20 he wrote *Temptation*, an immature work concerning a young monk possessed by a greater ideal than the Church could satisfy, the Devil tempts him with Lust, but the monk and Lust go forth in marriage to preach Socialism. His next play was *The King's Barber*—a story of bestial despotism bestially defeated.

It was written in prison. Next came *Faust and the City*, a remarkable forecast of the course of the Russian Revolution, finally recast in 1916, but written in 1908. Then came the comedies, including *Three Travellers and It*. *The Magi* was written in 1918 (its germ existed in his essay on "Positivism and Art," written in 1905), *Vasilisa the Wise* soon after, and *Ivan in Paradise* in 1919. Then he tried historical plays, *Oliver Cromwell* and *Thomas Campanella*, from that he returned to comedy, and in 1921 wrote *The Chancellor and the Locksmith* and *The Deliverance of Don Quixote*. The latter had been started in 1916. *The Bears' Wedding* appeared in 1922.

Of the three plays contained in this volume, two—*Faust and the City* and *The Magi*—will be entirely new to English readers, who may or may not have read *Vasilisa the Wise* in the limited edition of that play which was published last winter. In any case, a first volume of Lunacharski's plays would be inadequate without a work which, more than any other of his composition, has its roots in the folk lore of his own people. In the matter of style and metre we have everywhere tried to adhere rigidly to the Russian, and to convey in English the rhythm and tonal suggestions of the original. It is hoped soon to publish a second volume containing *The Deliverance of Don Quixote*, *Oliver Cromwell* and *The King's Barber*. These are all studies of tyranny, of authority, its necessity, its excess, its remedy. It is the Russian Revolution shedding light on the agonies of the past, across time and space.

This then, is Lunacharski's sphere. He is not an adherent of the LEF, the anarchy rebels of art, or a religious mystic like Blok, who often suggests Blake, or a bourgeois aristocrat, like Tennyson, or a Radical reformer, like Browning. He is always a revolutionary against the last named, but constructive as against the formless seekers of form, and on his guard against the infinite which the mystics pursue. To found his new order, he too has to find his new gods and to formulate the creed of a better world. It is the new non-Christianity which will not tolerate the Empire,

it is the spirit of Communism through which we may emerge from the chaos of Capitalism and the empiric errors of actual Communism

These biographical facts have also a bearing on his style. His style in prose is lucid, with occasional flights into the poetic, in poetry it is smooth, melodious, and moving freely in many forms but never eccentric like that of the writers of the LEF, nor does it ever quite attain the pure sublimity of Bely, Blok or Esenin at their highest. Indeed sometimes the strain of composition in the intervals of establishing a new and revolutionary system of education, leaves traces of hurry. But then he is very conscious of this, and *Mitra* is not yet available, for it is always being polished—just as his *Faust* and *Don Quixote* had to wait many years before their author passed them out as mature. His greatness is his schematism, and the consequentialness of his plays, the ardour and devotion and religious fervour which inspires all he says. As an author, he is full of echoes, very largely of the Bible, very often of opera, and frequently of his contemporary writers, who form a close association of communal work, only comparable to the intimacy in Elizabethan England of the great poets of that day. Then our poets in a sense, collaborated, either formally or in fact, the intense sense of private ownership in a particularly happy turn of phrase may, after all, be only a passing mood in English contemporary literature. But Lunacharski, with all this, has a strong and individual style, and very much to say for himself, and in his own way. Post-war Russia has many great writers, and amongst them Lunacharski will always have a high place.

But in all this we have written of him in the abstract, as a literary fiction, who might as well go by any other name. He is very much alive. His intense energy, the broad intellectuality and sagacious kindness which, as it were, gleams out of a manner of severe reserve, his quick understanding, his gift of oratory and melodious voice, his exposition of complicated themes in such a way that the audience wonder why they never knew

before how much already existed in their own cognisance ,
such are briefly, some of the impressions of a personal
contact

L A M
K W

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Any reader who knows Goethe's great *Faust* will not fail to see that my *Faust and the City* is suggested by the scenes in the Second Part of *Faust*, where Goethe's hero founds a Free City. The mutual relations between this child of genius with its founder, the resolution of the problem, in dramatic form, of genius and its tendency to an enlightened despotism on the one hand, and a democracy on the other—such are the ideas that exercised me and prompted my work. I first elaborated the subject in 1906. The entire play was written in a month in that charming village in the Abruzzi Introdacque, in 1908. For a long time the play was put aside. I took it up for a final revision, in exceptionally delightful circumstances, at the village of St. Léger on Lake Geneva, in 1916, the alterations principally consisted in very considerable cuts.

Some friends acquainted with my production think it represents a lively picture of the Russian Revolution. In any case I think it advisable to state that from December, 1916, there has not been the slightest modification of the text.

I had intended to publish this work, into which I had put all the best I could, at a quieter time, but I acceded to the pressure of my friends and decided to present it to the judgment of the public in the glorious and bitter and great days of the Socialist Revolution in Russia.

the extraordinarily exacting experiences and vicissitudes of the tragic struggle maintained by our party with its many enemies at home and abroad. There could never be any thought of rest or respite. So it occurred to me to create some mental relief for myself by taking up my pen and writing a poetic work, if possible, entirely unconnected with activities around me.

Naturally, my mind was filled with all sorts of emotions and ideas, thronging in from all sides through the circumstances of my life. The first product of this kind was the dramatic fantasy, *The Magi*. When I read it to my friends and told them that it had been written in eight nights, other Russian writers including amongst them Valeri Briusov (whose fame as a poet has also spread to England), refused to believe in the possibility of such intensity of work, especially as the result was so finished and smooth. In my preface to this drama I referred to the immense mental relief afforded to me by the addition of eight sleepless nights to the eight days of work. Naturally, a little later, in January 1919, I decided to repeat my experiment, and then there emerged, and was written in the course of a fortnight, the dramatic fairy tale, *Vasilisa the Wise*.

I have never, of design, in any of my writings, sought after obscurity, but neither have I been a disciple of rationalism in art. Possibly, to the very curious, it will appear that *Vasilisa* verges upon a problem play and to folk of a different calibre that is indefinite. This very fact, it seems to me, proves that some measure has been observed—that there is in it a real thought, which is, however, not expressed exegetically, but artistically.

The subject of *Vasilisa*, the style of its composition, which is fairly novel, I think, in Russian literature—the great approbation it received, amongst others from my friend Maxim Gorki—these were all motives to make me continue with the elaboration of the same material. The result of this has been the second part of *Vasilisa*, called *Mitha the Saviour*, a long dramatic poem for the publication of which for various

reasons I do not consider the present time opportune. I also intend to write a third part, to be entitled *The Last Hero*. The whole Trilogy will delineate in fabulous form a periphrasis of what I may term my social philosophy. This Trilogy can only be published in the course of some years.

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Faust and the City

A DRAMA FOR THE READER

Faust and the City

PROLOGUE

[Night The stars are shining brightly The red moon is approaching the horizon In the foreground to the left are mountains with wooded slopes the bare crags of the heights making a sharp outline against the background of coppery redness of the setting moon Below a valley in which lie the city and the sea as yet invisible]

Mephistopheles wrapped in a black cloak, is sitting overlooking the precipice A tense stillness]

Mephistopheles

Illusions! [He takes a deep breath] Illusions! This night, pock marked with gleams is not the vestibule of eternal night, not a home-coming to the Mother, but only one revolution of the earth In the æthereal ocean undulate to and fro, to and fro, from one extreme to another, stupid waves, glowing clusters emit light and heat and beget life, sensation, consciousness and pain! That crass White Cow engenders, engenders and pours her milk into space, with never a thought about what may come of it! Life loves life, wants to live What a paradox what a ridiculous contradiction it is that sets the eternal Reason topsy turvy!

And Man! Does not his everyday experience teach him what his imaginary existence really is, a flurry and scurry and ceaseless feverishness—an unappeasable disease Yet he wants to live—this degenerate, this unprofitable scum, this parasite of earth! Go and tell him that true Being is perfection immobility, a sleep without dreams, a majestic repose,—and should you find anyone to agree with you it will be some sick hypochondriac, some rat of the privy that has never discovered its life As for the others, they will jeer! They even imagine themselves rational, these petty worms! And they gnash their teeth at the sound of eternal wisdom

Consider Faust Has he not set his foot upon my neck, harnessed me to his chariot-wheels, this great sage? Ha-ha-ha! Like a little boy he has paddled in his little pond and built up a dam of a handful of sand and clay, and built some toy houses, and he is playing with his dolls The little fool, picking up empty shells! How I long sometimes to stamp all this trumpery flat! But is a blow worth even the weakest argument? I have to convince him, I have to convince this haughty brainless dwarf And no easy task! So I squat on my toes and lisp and show him educational pictures Suppose I breathed on him with my eternal chill and turned him into a frail crumb of matter—would not the White Cow bear us other Fausts?

Since that time when that happened, we have been powerless Who knows when the store of world perplexity shall drain off, when the waters shall recede?

No it must be! Faust must be convinced—so that he cries out for very fear and pain and loathing! It must be! His cries must to all eternity poison the air which his kind breathes So, Mephistopheles, put aside your crown of darkness, go forth to argue with the cretin Weave spider-webs for the frivolous fly, hug to your breast the hope that it will soon be buzzing helpless in your net, and that you will at last suck the juice of life out of this chimerical and frantic pate

PAUSE

Mephistopheles, would it not be better for you to be selfish—to hide yourself in some nook of the universe whence the stars are least seen and there go to sleep on the Mother's lap? Is it not love that is moving you in these efforts to save life from pain? No! I swear by the Mother, no! I am guided by the holiest spite I am a weapon I have to prove I busy myself in the name of Reason which is my essence Once It was born, Unreason—then I was born, Reason,—a protest, a recognition of the error, a yearning for peace So I cannot hide I must demonstrate I am summoned to set Reason upright I am devoured by an icy flame

of frenzy when I behold the complaisant torments of their existence For me there is no rest, no release, as long as the world is ablaze, and motion a-stir, and life through suffering thinks We will come home to you, Mother, and you shall yet uncreate us in the black ocean, you shall yet bestow on us the undisturbed repose of true Being

Mephistopheles is an idealist He is an idealist, do you hear, you stupid stars? Destroying, he creates For the purpose of his creative destruction he has borrowed from men their tricks and masquerades, their body, dress, logic—nay, in season, too, it seems Mephistopheles has borrowed their suffering, and has started life on a loan of light and heat, wherewith to plenish his mighty shadow and to become the weapon of destruction for those who are to be destroyed in the name of the restoration of the One

Sometimes my reason is entangled in the tatters of their costume It is well from time to time to recollect, to strive to render, even in the speech of human thought, wisdom superhuman

A Curse! The East is a-glow! The Earth, slowly revolving, is exposing to the sun her green and watery cheek, and that spot on her where, may be, there is proceeding the most decisive conflict between Unreason and Eternity The sun is coming to succour his mean offspring Let us hide!

[He covers his head in his cloak]

The Pale Angel [flying in the widescent sky, sings, accompanying himself on the harp]

Fair Princess Earth, thy slumber must thou break!
Thy Prince has come to kiss thee So, awake!

[The silent breeze is heard whispering to the plants]

The Breeze

Quaking, quivering, rustle
Blithe the blooms of earth,—
Grateful hsp and bustle,

The Plants

Where the grass is thick, soft breeze,
 Soothe it, smooth it, jester playful !
 Stir up strife 'midst leaves and trees ,
 'Midst the willows set thy cradle
 Spray live flowers kisses, singing
 Leaf songs, herald of the Sun !
 O'er the Earth breathe soft, low ringing,
 Holy hymns of life begun

*The Red Angel [in the beams of the red dawn blows a
 golden trumpet, and then sings]*

Fair Princess Earth, thy slumber must thou break !
 Thy Prince has come to kiss thee So awake !

Choir of Birds [sudden and noisy]

See now the sun, the sun now surmounting the crest ;
 Sing and exalt him, our Loved one, again and again !
 Gloria, Gloria ! Louder yet sing with full breast !
 Glorify Him ever crowned with a flaming of pain !
 Pour on us streams of thy beautiful heat till it glow !
 Shower down light—we will bathe in the beams of the
 morn !

Chant to the Holy One—praise Him whom none is may
 know,

Whom we inhabit, in whom now anew we are born !

A Little Bird

Light, light !
 Life, life !
 Flit and twit,
 Loving it !
 Chat and Chit !
 Catches it !
 Nestling's dawn !
 Beak a-yawn !
 Wants his life,—
 Life, life !

Choir of Birds

He is risen—rejoice ! He glows—to him pray !
 Haste to Life's day !

In wondrous manner
Life gaily greets you,
His sweet face entreats you !
Salve ! Hosanna !

Mephistopheles

A noise chorus ! Though with a lot of loathsome sense
in it ! Oh, ye little winged vermin, ye distant descend-
ants of the Terrible Error, ye are indeed celebrating
the source of your existence ! But—I am glad to see
the hawk has clutched one of your songsters The
hawk also praises the sun, but in his own fashion

[*The rays of the sun penetrate into the valley The City, like a
lace-work of towers and spires, awakens, kindling in the
morning splendour The sea glistens*]

The Bells

Shadows steal away,
Daylight floods the height
Night gives way to day,
Shadows all in flight
Golden is our chime,
Sweet our carillon,
Ringing in sweet rhyme,
Bells of crystal tone
Peals of joy we play,
Echoing repeat,
Joyous peals, and sweet,—
Day ! Ding, dong, ding ! Day !

The Noise of the City

Work, rousing slow,
Starts on its droning course,
There come and go
Man, mule and horse,
Wheels clattering beat,
The chapmen cry
But still am I
Not yet complete,
Still growing—All a-blare
Is the bazaar, as though

On the quay
 Sailors stand,
 Weigh anchor and sing,
 By the sea,
 With one hand
 Fishermen trumpeting,
 Near the strand,
 Tall ships, and between,
 To and fro,
 May be seen
 Little boats meandering

Rasp of steel now rises and falls,
 Stone carts rumble here and there,
 Noise and clamour everywhere
 Answer now the daylight calls!

Sleepless all the long night-time,
 From his garret the poet peers,
 Labour breathing hot he hears,
 And composes a living rhyme

From the open door
 Like incense pour
 With strange refrains
 Loud organ strains
 They soar on high,
 O'er gables they fly,
 Now their reeds thrill
 With a holy trill,
 Then in sudden fright
 On earth they alight,
 In a fugal glory
 They whisper their story
 To voices divine
 The cathedral stones,
 All tremble, then
 Responding combine
 In deep bass moans,
 Amen!

A bugle's blare
 Rends
 The slumbering air,
 And ends
 Then, foreboding wounds and blood,
 Come the drums with roll and thud
 By'r left—quick—march !
 And, like an arch
 Of purple flame, behold
 The silken flag unfold !

Song of the Lancers

Lancers, let your cheers ring out !
 Stand, like your lances, straight and stout !
 Then to the charge—oh, Lancers all—
 Charge and slay at the trumpet's call !
 Boldly slay and boldly die—
 Not for us to question why
 Some folk prate thou shalt not kill ,
 We may slay, yet do no ill
 Boldly die and boldly slay—
 Peter won't turn us away
 Soldiers follow other laws,
 Deaf to all the groans they hear
 Peter must forgive because
 He once lopped a lacquey's ear
 Who takes the sword, by sword shall die ?
 We're no cowards, we laugh haw-haw,
 Stroke our beards down spruce and spry,
 Kiss our girls—by Lancers' Law—
 Yet offend not Him on high !
 Trumpets soon for us will blare ,
 Merrily we'll fight and straight
 Someone fallen ? C'est la guerre !
 What do you expect of fate ?

Song of the Monks

God, God, to thee we turn !
 In dust we lie,
 In fear we die,
 Thy face is still so stern
 We sink in paths whercon we stray,—

Oh pity, pity Adam's kind !
 We here in dark despair confined,
 To see the stars of hope we pray
 Our flesh with whips we scourge and tear,
 In dust we lie,
 In fear we die
 Oh, not for us to dare
 Raise to God's scales our eyes unwary
 Of sins so many, so great !
 O miserere !
 Ye Hosts Immaculate,
 Pray with us in our fears !
 Thou, at God's throne of ire,
 Plead for us, and inspire
 Firm faith, and let thy tears
 Wash us, oh Virgin Mary !
 O miserere !

The Workmen [are building a palace and sing]

By whom is one foundation laid,
 Defiant of all age to stand ?
 By Labour, in its might arrayed—
 By the victorious Workers' Hand !

This porphyry that dykes the dune,
 Firm rampart on Time's flood-swept strand,
 By whom save Labour was it hewn,
 By the world-ruling Workers' Hand !

Who makes our palace roof of gold
 To flash afar across the land ?
 A band of brothers true and bold,
 United by the Workers' Hand

Who crowns our palace with a spire
 Of rubies ? 'Tis that giant-band,
 Whose dreams, compliant to desire,
 Come true under the Workers' Hand !

The People-King shall hold high state,
 Supreme now shall his empire stand ,

Rich shall he be, and wise and great,—
And his device—the Workers' Hand!

Mephistopheles [leaning out over the City]

The nonsensical symphony is reaching its climax. Let us then descend now and play our part in it! Our design is ready. Over the City an invisible spider's web is being spun. So—to begin!

[He descends, the morning breeze blowing his black cloak open.]

CURTAIN

SCENE I

[The audience room in Faust's palace, with carved oak panelling in late Gothic style is divided by two steps between the back of the stage and the front. On the wall there are three handsome niches with bronze statues of Plato, Aristotle and Albertus Magnus. The upper part of the room is covered with a rich carpet. The table is spread with a tapestry table cloth, and has on it writing materials and a few folios, and beside it stand a huge globe and a throne-like armchair. Several small Venetian armchairs. In the lower part some solid oaken seats. At the back a small door screened with tapestry, showing Faust's blazon—a fist in an iron glove holding a torch—leads to Faust's private apartments. At the door stands a picturesque lancer leaning on his halberd.]

Enter Faust and Faustina

Faust is an old man tall and straight. He wears a cap of velvet embroidered with gold from under which fall snow-white curls. His beard covers his chest. His appearance is kind and affable—a very mobile face and often an expression of majestic self-satisfaction. His eyes are dark and youthful, his eye brows black and well outlined. He is dressed in a long blue velvet tunic the sleeves trimmed with lace. His hands are thin and delicate.

Faustina is a tall pale girl of great beauty. Her eye lashes are usually downcast. She wears a silver brocaded cap from under which escape two luxuriant auburn curls. Her dress is of a silvery material and of simple design.

They are returning from an early morning walk. [Faust is gracious and merry.]

Faust

What a fine walk. And when you—let me see, Faustina, you are now nineteen years old?

Faustina

Yes, father

Faust

Yes—when you were born, all this green life was still in its infancy, all those rare trees scarcely a man's height. And now! Was it not worth that struggle with the sea? Such life, such stately life! How grandly the Earth bears and brings forth, giving herself to the caresses of the air and the kisses of the sun. It was

down in that valley—the one surrounded with tall poplars—I confess I once wept, just like an old baby ! And, what was even more foolish, I was ashamed of my tears, even before you, my dear . . . How tranquil it all was ! All the more so for the rustling of the leaves . . . But just then a little songster began chanting his mass, the trees standing up like huge green candles . . . He was singing, singing glory to his god

Faustina

What god ?

Faust [with an all-embracing gesture]

To Pan !

Faustina [rather nervously]

Father, why is it that of all your beautiful temples in Trozburg, there is none consecrated to Pan ? Why do they all honour that pale god with his wreath of thorns and his mother of afflictions ? And why are the priests who officiate so fat, like his Grace Bishop Wilfrid ?

Faust [laughing and putting his hands to his ears]

Questions ! Questions ! What a lot of questions ! My silent Faustina, are you going to join my enemy-friends, such as Master Gabriel ?

[Faustina starts as though to speak, but lowers her eyes and says nothing]

Faust [sitting in one of the little chairs by the table]

Why is it there is no service to Pan in my churches ? Why ? Because it would alarm all my powerful neighbours, patrons and vassals . . . And what would be the use of that ? They would start a holy crusade against me, and then I should have to shed oceans of blood . . . That is one reason why Jesus is worshipped here . . . But I consider his religion in its own way lofty, instructive and serviceable, and its myths and ceremonies are beautiful . . . As for Bishop Wilfrid—he is a great artist and a man of fine intellect . . . Let us not be fanatics, my little girl . . . There is nothing more horrible than fan-

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[They are returning from an early morning walk. Faust is gracious and merry.]

Faust

What a fine walk

And when you—let me see, Faustina, you are now nineteen years old?

Faustina

Yes father

Faust

Yes—when you were born all this green life was still in its infancy, all those rare trees scarcely a man's height. And now! Was it not worth that struggle with the sea? Such life such stately life! How grandly the Earth bears and brings forth giving herself to the caresses of the air and the kisses of the sun. It was

down in that valley—the one surrounded with tall poplars—I confess I once wept, just like an old baby ! And, what was even more foolish, I was ashamed of my tears, even before you, my dear How tranquil it all was ! All the more so for the rustling of the leaves But just then a little songster began chanting his mass, the trees standing up like huge green candles He was singing, singing glory to his god

Faustina

What god ?

Faust [with an all embracing gesture]

To Pan !

Faustina [rather nervously]

Father, why is it that of all your beautiful temples in Trotzburg, there is none consecrated to Pan ? Why do they all honour that pale god with his wreath of thorns and his mother of afflictions ? And why are the priests who officiate so fat, like his Grace Bishop Wilfrid ?

Faust [laughing and putting his hands to his ears]

Questions ! Questions ! What a lot of questions ! My silent Faustina are you going to join my enemy-friends, such as Master Gabriel ?

[Faustina starts as though to speak but lowers her eyes and says nothing]

Faust [sitting in one of the little chairs by the table]

Why is it there is no service to Pan in my churches ? Why ? Because it would alarm all my powerful neighbours, patrons and vassals And what would be the use of that ? They would start a holy crusade against me, and then I should have to shed oceans of blood That is one reason why Jesus is worshipped here But I consider his religion in its own way lofty, instructive and serviceable, and its myths and ceremonies are beautiful As for Bishop Wilfrid—he is a great artist and a man of fine intellect Let us not be fanatics, my little girl There is nothing more horrible than fan-

aticism Could you endure a man who is narrow and spiteful? Just keep in mind, then, that whenever even the best and most sensible of men becomes a devotee of one idea, however noble and fine it may be, he becomes narrow and spiteful If, at the helm of my sovereign State, created by me out of nothing, there stood—say, for instance, Master Gabriel—what irreparable disasters would come of it! Substantially, his ideas are the same as mine, but only the merest fraction of mine, one colour out of a whole palette

And, by the way,—about this fellow Gabriel Do you know, he made me quite angry with him the other day? I had to speak to him rather sharply And I know his mother comes to you for help in the good work of visiting the poor and sick Well, tell her that I—that I do really love this upstart! [*He smiles*]

But judge for yourself [*He gets up*] I had summoned six of my best craftsmen—among them Gabriel and that foreign braggart, the Scotchman I explained to them the need of building another tower, like my Falcon Tower I pointed out the site for it, a site really worthy of giants—a swamp in the broad plain near Zuidkerken, which would first have to be drained Suddenly Gabriel begins to complain that this will cost the lives of tens or even hundreds of workmen I tell him “My good friend, quite possibly We are waging war with nature Honour and glory to those who fall in the strife!” But, says he “One must not, for a great caprice, kill men who want to live, taking advantage of the need that drives them to work” I got rather angry I do get angry when I am opposed with arguments not entirely lacking in common sense And he is by no means devoid of common sense, this Master Gabriel What he lacks is readiness of wit, adaptability To halt at every step and start moralising and analysing—that would be the end of the chapter for any growing society of human beings! After all, there is something higher than morals, or even logic, and that is—life, life that desires increase But we have been philosophising enough [*He turns to the lancer*] Pieter, if there is anyone in the waiting room

The Lancer [opening the door]

It is full, your Highness

[*Faust sits on his throne like an emperor, Faustina on a bench at his feet. The Secretary comes in dressed in black, with a golden chain round his neck. He gives a long list of petitioners to Faust, who looks through it with some curiosity.*]

Faust

I shall not be able to receive a tenth of these to-day
Let us see, now Ah, the Florentine artist, Jacopo
Dellabella Call him in! Faustina, you do not
know him as well as you should, he is a great and
wonderful man. He can do—everything!

[*The Secretary ushers in Dellabella, a thin little man with a rough grey beard and bristling hair on a big head. He is dressed in a shabby velvet costume. He bows low several times, sweeping the ground with the scraggy plume of his hat.*]

Faust

Come nearer, maestro. Do not fear to tread the steps
that separate me from common men. Your plans,
Dellabella

Dellabella [triumphantly unrolling a long parchment]

These are they! (*A minute's pause.*) My idea is this:
A round edifice, of a size undreamed of hitherto, standing
on a square platform reached by sixteen steps, each
side to be 6,000 ells, the edifice surmounted with a
dome lofty enough to enclose the tallest spire in this
city. Inside, it would appear to rise up from four
huge pediments, each bearing aloft on its dizzying
summit a group of graceful columns, passing directly
into four flying buttresses supporting the dome that
crowns the whole building. And there I introduce a
rose window of 60 ells diameter, of sparkling coloured
glass, where shall stand a heroic representation of the
Godhead in white robes, with a mighty gesture of his
hand bestowing upon us light, motion and order. And
the Godhead shall have the most majestic features ever
beheld by human eye—the features of your Illustrious
Highness, first of all rulers on earth.

[*He bows low.*]

Faust [looking at the plan]

A gigantic flattery, my dear Dellabella

Dellabella [with an impulsive gesture raising both hands above his head as though to ward off a blow]

My Lord, the tribute of an artist's admiration So far
from being flattery

Faust

Flattery, flattery, Dellabella, but gigantic!

Dellabella

Other statues and pictures will represent spirits of a
lower order—the elements

Faust [interrupting]

I am just thinking Would it not be rather invidious,
Dellabella? Granted that none but fools would fail to
understand the admitted lawfulness of such a monument
in my honour, here, in one of the finest cities of Europe,
capital of a flourishing country, which I evoked out of
nothingness—I, I alone! Yet it is embarrassing to
hear the objections even of a fool, when one's own merit
is in question Sometimes, indeed, I wish But
let us not be gloomy! They tell me the local stone is
poor stuff But I built the Falcon Tower with it, and
the quay, and most of this palace They say our men
here are poor stuff—yet might a great master achieve a
great work with them Has Baron Mephisto looked
after you properly? When are you going to begin the
portrait of my beautiful Iustina?

music and recitals of the most pleasant stories, and so relieve the tedium of the sittings,—which to me will fly by with the celerity of Zeus' lightning, and will be my very happiest hours

Faust

Enough, enough, maestro—you disconcert my northern-born fledgeling !

[The artist bows and goes out]

Faust

Now, that man—by his chatter you would take him for a commonplace Italian charlatan ; but he is really a great master Jester in his talk, he is so amusing, but a great man in his work ! Sometimes I think every artist ought to be a sovereign prince otherwise even the finest heads, lacking a crown, have to wear the jester's cap of servility to satisfy us, their lords And our manners are still rude, Faustina Those poor artists ! But let us not be gloomy ! Especially as I see yet another great name on the list Secretary, ask Niklaas Nielsen, the mariner, to come in

[The Secretary introduces Nielsen He is a broad shouldered man with bushy beard and whiskers and greyish hair He wears a dark coat with a leather girdle, and carries a whip]

Nielsen

Your Highness, excuse my dress and my whip Knowing you are interested in my voyages, and dislike useless ceremony, I came straight from my frigate, without troubling about court polish On this last voyage we had such music aboard as if the Devil himself had married a score of imps and the "Albatross" was dancing to his princely wedding tune Yet I sailed further South than ever before—down the coast of Africa I have brought back golden sand, elephants' tusks, some fragrant wood But the greatest gift I have brought to Europe is some black men of extraordinary strength—half-men, rather, but capable of man's work Certainly they need a good deal of the whip Yet they are not stupid when they see before them the choice of death under the lash, or work, they choose

work They are stronger than mules, of great endurance, tidy fellows and cheery withal And, above all, there is no standing on ceremony with them Do you see, sir, why there is no occasion for pity? It is very doubtful whether they have souls at all If they have, their souls cannot be like Christian souls I can supply Your Highness with any quantity of them at 20 ducats apiece Any number your Highness may require A fact, I swear by St Elmo! Shall I show you some, sir? I brought a few samples with me I have forty on board I started with a larger cargo, but ended with only forty, the rest, somehow or other, went to feed the fishes

Faustina [to her father]

What is he saying?

Faust

This is—curious

[Two sailors bring in four negroes in chains They are huge coal black creatures with big whites of the eye curly haired and thick lipped]

Faust

Almost animals

Nielsen

But they work like men Down, you apes, down!

[He brandishes his whip and the negroes prostrate themselves]

Faust

Don't strike them, Captain—I cannot stand that!

Nielsen

Without it, it's useless And, besides, as I explained, there's no call to pity them That's the way to make them obey you And easier to deal with than a gang of white convicts! Every Christian seems to be possessed of a devil of insubordination Not that I don't whip Christians too, but if you send one of them to kingdom Come who knows what will be said about it there, eh? And sometimes it can't be helped,

though it is hard to stifle every feeling of pity for those who are just like ourselves I think the Devil himself must have some compassion for his dam, when he is teaching her her business with his iron pestle [*He laughs loudly*]

Faust [*stroking his beard reflectively and looking at the negroes*]

Yes To possess a labour force about which there was no call for compassion To the great, there must be obedience Your are right, Captain But, you see, I have compassion even for the horse and the ass Though I am not just like an ass—you will agree, Captain am I ?—even less than you resemble these black anthropoids ?

Nielsen

The Duke is compassionate Compassion is a vice.

Faust

In the great ?

Nielsen

Even in the small

Faust

A philosopher, Captain ! What school do you profess ?

Nielsen

The school of the sea Your Highness That's where I had my schooling

Faust

Well I will see how your charming brunettes can work But they shall be treated humanely

Nielsen [*with a contemptuous smile*]

Then they will strangle their overseers, that is all Talk to them without a whip—impossible ! They have a standard of their own No, I cannot undertake to give them up to you Duke unless their new master introduces himself to them with a taste of the lash that will make mine seem like a mother's caress

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Faust [seriously]

That condition I cannot accept

Nielsen

The Archbishop is ready to buy them—your neighbour

Faust

We will think it over, Niklaas Stay awhile in Trotz burg

[*Nielsen bows and takes his leave As he goes Mephistopheles enters He is dressed in a bright red costume of the period and carries a hat with a cock's plume On his breast is the Order of the Golden Fleece and he wears a long sword with a golden hilt He is very tall and strongly built his face tawny his little pointed beard black his hair so closely cropped that it looks like a skull cap thin lips usually closed in an acid smile and eyebrows drawn up triangularly His eyes are large and cold and vacuous in sharp contrast with the sinister but often humorous expression of his face*]

Mephistopheles [bowing with a comical solemnity]
Duke

Faust

Oh—Mephisto! This means that the happy day I was promising myself in spite of Niklaas unmannerliness is over Probably you bring a mass of disagreeables

Mephisto

As always I am the Duke's eye the only one that does not deceive him—I am the Duke's ear, which

Faust

Which I should like to block up!

Mephisto

Does the Duke fear the truth?

Faust

My friend truth is relative It consists of the material we take in from without and the form we ourselves give it These eyes and ears of mine have the power of imposing on any matter a decorous or at least a tolerable, form But my third eye and my third ear, after selecting

monstrous and abortive things out of their surroundings, go farther, and array them in a garb even more monstrous than their reality

Mephisto

My images are the expression of Being—as it is—undraped. Nature has given them shaggy hair and tails and scales. But you, Duke, demand in all things a courtly apparel, neatly tailored, in rosy satins and sky-blue velvets. Even Death, when her turn comes to be presented to you—and she is monstrous enough, that noseless beldame—will have to comply with etiquette and look pleasant

Faust

Most certainly! The Stoic philosophy has contrived her a most becoming veil. And you would really like to tear it off her in the hope of frightening me with your so called truth—skeletons putrefaction, worms? But all this talk is no more than human mummery, for death in itself is neither evil nor good, but as it were the zero in nature. Good and Evil are inventions of Man

Mephisto

So now our philosophical discussion is proceeding merrily, oh Faust. Here we are, dancing a metaphysical minuet, curtsying, skipping, and coquetishly lifting our skirts. Meanwhile, over your country—only look!—the waves are breaking

Faust [anxiously]

What's that? Some damage to the dykes?

Mephisto

The waves of rebellion, Duke

Faust [relieved]

Oh, that's for the police!

Mephisto [taking a step forward and in a quiet and ominous voice]

Old Rebble and his wife are at it again. I have arrested

him, and will bring him at once before you, Faust.
[Aloud] Princess, I will ask you to withdraw to your apartments

[Faustina with an anxious glance at her father, goes out]

Faust

Of whom and of what are you speaking, oh Evil Spirit that never gives me rest ?

Mephisto [solemnly]

Faust, Faust, how I should like to give you rest !

Faust

I yearn for activity, and for that I need quietude
 I want to get on with my work without interruptions

Mephisto [maliciously]

What you want is to stand in a corner, shielded from all fears on three sides, and to have only one foe straight in front of you. But I tell you truly, Faust, you have a countless host of enemies behind you and beside you and within, whole regiments above you and beneath you. And in all things you will be disquieted and mortally fatigued, and you will not lie down to sleep but dreams will drive you from your bed, and you will toss and toss until you ask for real rest—and then you will be mine, Faust,—then !

Faust

You insane devil, your fiendish wit spins ever like a top about one point. But above all I do not want to listen to your abominable reports, because you are a great slanderer. Yes, a great slanderer !

[Mephisto claps his hands. Two powerful lancers lead in a thin, surly old man in chains. He is dressed in goat skins, under which his body shows bronze, his face is covered with deep wrinkles, like so many weals. his beard is rumpled full of straw and burdock, his hair fall, low on his forehead and his eyes glisten like a wolf's]

Faust

Who is this ?

Mephisto

Ask him

Faust

Who are you, old man ?

Rebble

And who are you, old man ?

Faust

I am Duke Faust

Rebble

You are a murderer, like all your fellows. Tell them to release me, you slayer of men !

Mephisto

Hold him firmer, or he will make a dash at His Highness

Faust

But . . . this . . . is only a poor sick man

Rebble [smiles darkly and sings in a whining voice]

Me have ye goaled and chained and burned ,
 I have writhed in bitter agony,
 I have wasted to death for liberty ,
 But how to slay me ye never learned
 I have gnawed my fingers, lacking food ,
 I have rotted in dungeons, dank, forlorn ,
 My flesh in shreds vultures have torn
And feasted in the martyr's blood
 And I have been one running sore
 Under the lash, my life's blood lost
 And oft my carcass, ocean tossed,
 From ocean deeps was washed ashore
 But, from my ashes to new birth
 I rise again, I rise from death ,
 My soul returning home to earth,
 Builds a new body for its breath
 I went, I come, and on I go ,
 I will eat through the whole world's chains,

And dry the tears of all brought low—
 The last of tears for the last of pains
 How shall I dry the tears of woe—
 Tears of oppressed and humbled slaves ?
 Down with the tyrant's purple show !
 To your graves, princes ! Down to your graves !
 Down ! And be ancient wrongs forgot,
 And cleansed be all hearts of pride,
 When in their blood-stained graves to rot,
 Your heads and crowns fall side by side !

Is it enough ? Else I can sing more For the rest, I
 am all here

Faust

Horrible man, you are ill

Rebble

Of course ! We are all ill, and you are our illness
 It is cured by fire and the sword I fear nothing Bear
 that in mind ! Not—that we are many, not—that I
 am immortal, but only this—that I fear nothing, and
 so in the end shall conquer you,—shall plant this worn
 and muddy shoe on the perfumed neck of the mighty !

Mephisto

Duke, the great of this world strike with a mighty
 hammer on the hearts of mankind, but a force meets a
 resistance equal to itself, as your esteemed Florentine
 teaches So, in a way, this old man is your own reflec-
 tion—as it were a distorted plebeian portrait of you
 I really don't know—should I have his head struck off ?
 Such beings are in themselves deathless, being reflexes
 If in the end all the heads of all the Rebbles are to fall,
 there would have to be a beheading of Authority
 Authority strikes off the head of its own shadow, and
 then wonders that it grows again They call Rebble a
 hydra—Or should I have him lodged in some place
 where they'll keep him safe ?

Faust

Let him go Here his hatred is unavailing Here the
 subjects love their lord

Rebble

The wife and I, we'll gnaw away a little of that love !
We still have our teeth our teeth !

Faust

I am neither tyrant nor murderer This does not
disturb me I am the creator and benefactor of this
land—her first workman I can even indulge in a test
of my people's gratitude

Mephisto

Take him out by the city gates and set him free

Rebble

I swear to you, you devourer of men, I shall pay you
off for this magnanimity when I spit in your proud eyes

[*He is led away*]

Faust

What a melancholy sight !

Mephisto

This lunatic has a most sagacious wife I know the old
couple—they are of my own stock, indeed, distant
kinsmen of mine The old woman's name is Envie
The old witch conducts her affairs very nicely, affording
no legal ground for arrest All she does is to compare—
to compare everything—housing, food, dress, work,
power, honour She draws parallels, which are in
truth magical lines Under my very eyes, delight in
the splendour of distinguished patrons, and pride in
their power, have been perverted into an unruly hatred
She has a most original outlook on the world—But
enough of that ! Your Highness has had timely
warning, for the present things are taking their
course At this moment, Duke, there stand at
the gates of your palace a crowd of craftsmen, yelling
as loud as if Rebble and Envie had been here not three
weeks but three years They have nearly broken
through the gates Of course the guard will not let
them in, you receive only whom you will But,

amongst them I noticed that dissolute and pernicious fellow Gabriel. He is their spokesman, and he will not believe that Your Highness will refuse to receive them—although it is merely a matter of some girl or other who it seems was carried off last night. They suspect the culprit stands high at Court. I have investigated the affair and I surmise that the girl is frivolous. I should never have committed myself to disturbing Your Highness for such a trifle. But if the Duke could only hear their clamour! Big Hans is standing with his long legs wide apart waving his arms like a windmill, and yelling like a costermonger. 'What's all this about the justice of Faust!' Naturally I gave instant orders for their dispersal, but

Faust

I am hardly in the mood just now but still, admit them. The morning had begun so well!

Mephisto

An evil omen Faust! Whatever starts well, ends ill. Not that what starts ill ends any better.

[*He goes out*]

Faust [alone]

Fleeting shadows all this—fleeting shadows! And God's image cannot be carved without the rubble flying in all directions and the sculptor's face and beard being covered with the chips of the marble. A fund of spiritual insight—of blithe spiritual understanding—that is what man needs what I have found in my work. Faust, keep your mind clear and your heart blithe, and remember how much you have done—how much you want to do must do—But they really are making a row!

[A group of craftsmen enter noisily behind Mephistopheles who withdraws from them gesticulating. Seeing Faust there is a lish and they stand at some distance shifting from one foot to the other cap in hand. Among them are prominent a terrible old man Walrhast his son Big Hans, and the master craftsmen Gabriel and Will Scott.]

Faust

What do you want of me, my children? And why so much noise, as though you were really children? But wait—first let me say one word. This day has already brought me a number of little worries. I am already weary, though the mortar has not yet sounded noon.

. Children, I work hard—probably harder than any of you. And it is for you I work—for the City, the darling of my heart. So do not exhaust me with constant petitions and complaints. You have a good judge in Mijnheer Jan van der Hoog,—go to him.

[*Big Hans makes a gesture of impatience, but Gabriel stops him and steps forward. Faust frowns.*]

Gabriel

Most honoured Duke, we all appreciate and revere your work. It would never occur to us to disturb you with our mishaps, grave though they be, were there any other road available to justice. You will remember, wise sovereign, that more than once the Brotherhood of Free Masons and the General Assembly of Craftsmen have sent me and my comrade, Will Scott, as a deputation to beseech of you, as the true father of his young people, to create the office of Tribunes, freely elected by all without exception, by guilds, master-craftsmen, foremen and 'prentices—all on an equal footing. Then we should have our own court for matters outside trade disputes, and need not disturb you, Duke. For—if you will pardon me, most gracious sovereign—you have set over us a judge who indeed may be a man of great learning, but is meek before the mighty, and certainly not overburdened with intelligence.

Faust

My dear Gabriel, you are notoriously a democrat, a dreamer, and so steeped in Plutarch as to imagine yourself a citizen of some ancient republic. When you were godfather to the son of the blacksmith, Maunts, did you not give him the name of Brutus? Quite innocent fantasies, these, in a private individual, but God forbid that we should try to realise them in our

social order ! You will find older men, men of greater experience and learning, who, knowing the worth of democracy, yet understand also the incomparable value of an enlightened monarchy

Hans

Stop !—Monarchy or Republic—what has that got to do with it ? Have we come here to pour peas from one measure into another ? Heaven's fury ! My sister, Duke give me back my sister ! Father, speak—you !

Wahrhaft [in utter confusion]

Your Highness—my daughter—Ortruda—whom you will deign to remember, for you once gave her a little gold chain She, my daughter, sleeps in a corner room always with the window open [*Aside to Hans*] No boy—wait ! Let me tell His Highness everything from the beginning She sleeps with her window open I am a light sleeper Perhaps Your Highness knows how lightly old men do sleep ? And Pluto, our dog, likewise As for Hans, as it happens, he spent the night at the Applegarden Inn Possibly your Highness remembers Emma, the daughter of the innkeeper, who won second prize at the beauty show at which Your Highness gave the first prize to my daughter Ortruda ?

Hans [interrupting him]

The point is, Duke that some robber carried off my sister through the window, He had thrown poisoned bread to Pluto and put some drug in his water, the fiendish brute ! The villain must have accomplices, I found tracks of horses, leading to the nearest cross roads Heaven's fury, if I catch the brute, I'll tie him up in a knot that even the wisdom of Faust won't undo ! My sister ! Will you permit it, Duke ? My Ortruda ! The monster ! And I know who the villain is !

Gabriel

It is only a surmise—we must have an exhaustive enquiry

Faust

Whom do you suspect, then, of this truly dastardly crime ?

Gabriel

Don't say, Hans,—don't say as long as you

Hans

I shall tell everything, because it lies heavy on my heart. The culprit is Faustulus, the merry Prince. Yes, Faustulus ! It's not the first time he's tried to get her !

Faust [rising and looking at him menacingly]

Take care, boy !

Hans

I am not a man to be frightened ! Why are you staring at me ? Were your eyes daggers I would not retreat one step. It is Faustulus ! He has been threatening her. Emma, and other girls too, overheard him. It's no good hiding him away under the bed or in some out of the way place. Let him come here ! If he is the son of his father he can at least look his accuser in the face.

Faust [sitting down with a constrained smile]

Good—good ! That is the spirit ! Why are you not a soldier ?

Hans

Because I have no desire to fight for money or, still less, for the interests of others. But in my own cause, I am always prepared to stand firm.

Faust [still smiling]

How did you manage to be the son of so peaceable a man as Wahrhaft ?

Hans

Just as Faustulus managed to be yours

Faust

Oh—oh! Don't try to push my patience too far! I might get really angry and then Faustus shall come here and dispel your suspicions

Hans

Yes, yes,—we must have it out!

Faust [smiling again]

Have you many of this sort, Gabriel?

Gabriel

Your Highness, you do not yet know your people in them lie hidden treasures far exceeding those of Solomon's Temple

Faust [laughing]

Are there, indeed, O Gracchus van Bond? Well, then—the less cause for gloom! Yes, Hans, you shall have your sister back. Whatever it cost, we will put this matter straight [*To his Secretary*] Request the Prince's attendance [*The Secretary bows and leaves*] Quietly now, and all will be well, Hans,—I give you my ducal word—Well, Gabriel, how is the draining of the swamps getting on, under the new fortifications?

Gabriel

Not well, Your Highness, there is much illness among the workmen, We have as many shifts as possible, but nobody wants to stop on a job like that

Faust [reflecting]

Nitlars suggests black labour

Gabriel

The time is not yet ripe, Your Highness

Faust

Oh, you are right, you are right, mediator for the oppressed! If I succeed in—But for that, you see, I shall need time. And, on the Zudlerlen side, our territory is continuous with the lands of that savage

fool Beeresberg By building a good strong tower there, we shall both drain the noxious swamp and cut off that madman's chances of provoking bloodshed—which, as I know he contemplates

Gabriel

He will never venture to attack you Your Highness And meanwhile we lose men and arouse in the hearts of the survivors strong feelings of resentment against the sovereign

Faust [frowning]

Have you ever seen a sovereign more patient than I am ?

Gabriel

Why should not Your Highness be patient ? After all you always have everything your own way It would be quite different had you to comply with our demands according to a charter

Faust [dryly]

That will never come about Gabriel A State in which the head obeys the body is ridiculous

[Enter Faustus He wears a magnificent coat of pomegranate velvet with the Ordre of the Golden Fleece and other decorations lace jewell'd rings and jewell'd buckles His thin yellow hair falls to his shoulders tightly curled He has a pale face a narrow forehead strong protruding chin little watery eyes and a big nose arrogantly tilted]

Faustus

You sent for me father ? But I see you are occupied with the populace [He motions to go]

turbulent head of my Hans. He is inferring from some threats of yours—it is absurd to repeat it—some threats against a girl and so on. Imagine Faustulus he is tempted to charge you with the abduction of this pretty Ortruda. You remember Ortruda the queen at the Labour Festival I inaugurated five months ago? A very pretty girl!

Faustulus [shrugging his shoulders]

Do you expect me to remember all the pretty girls in the City?

Hans

Liar! Excuse me Duke but he is a liar. And now I am quite convinced that he is guilty.

Faust

Careful Hans!

Hans

Prince Faustulus did you not speak to Ortruda last Monday at the fountain on your way back from the hunt? Did you not ask her to let your horse have a drink? Did you not call her by her Christian name? Did you not compare her with a rose in full bloom? Answer!

Faustulus

I rather please spare me converse with drunken roysterers. Even at this distance I can smell their vile sour wine. Have some consideration for me—for my birth and breeding!

Scott

And this was said after the girl had explained—as several women who were there can attest—that she had a sweetheart—and that I was he ?

Faustulus [showing his teeth]

Oh after such an explanation did I venture to persist ?
Did I risk offending such an important personage ?
Though my good friend who are you ?

Scott [indignant]

I thought there were no jesters at our Duke's court !

Faustulus [with a constrained calm]

You boor you know I am a Prince and so cannot fight you

Hans

So you will not fight me ? No ? Then I appeal to the Divine Ordeal ! I will prove in any suitable way that you are the suborner of my sister and of my family's good name Choose your own weapon !

Faustulus [smiling]

Do you not understand you animal that I am a being cast in quite another mould ? Should I fight a duel with a cock ? Explain it to him father It bores me

Hans

So you are cast in another mould ? Well let us open our veins and see whose blood flows redder and more abundantly Or would you prefer some other competition ? I am a master of six trades and can do first class work in them all Can you do that ? Or any test ! I will even undertake a disputation with you in Latin Or if you like a verse making competition ! God's judgment will reveal itself in any or all Make your own choice ! Speak you hapless wretch unless you want

Faust

Gently my bully gently ! By heaven were you not so pleasing to me I should have to be angry with you

Master William, the women have been telling you tales
But here you have the Prince declaring on his word of
honour that he does not even remember the girl Do
you attach more credence to market gossip?

Hans

Often I've seen him looking at Truda!

Gabriel

In a word this matter must be investigated And, as
the Duke himself, being father of the defendant and
human like the rest of us, cannot be impartial, there-
fore

Faust [rising]

Enough, enough of this, Gabriel! I have already
heard too much This scene is becoming undignified
I am the sovereign and creator of this land, I may say,
out of nothingness You have come here to live and
work on it, as subjects of my sceptre *[More calmly]*
The girl shall be found Baron Mephisto, to morrow
she is to be at her parents' home To morrow! You
hear me? I know you can manage to find her No
quibbles! I command you finally and definitely
to morrow she is to be at her home The culprit shall
be severely punished, whoever he be

[He rises with the intention of departing]

Gabriel

Even if it were your son—and Baron Mephisto?

Faust [reflects a moment then in an impressive voice]

What hateful suspicion! No! Baron, you are, in a
word, to clear up this matter to the general satisfaction
Now, children, go! *[He smiles]* What a trouble a
father has with his thousands of children! And the
ages are watching, the ages are waiting, and the years
are passing—and none too many are left for Faust
Go, then, go!

*[They all leave by the lower door Faust and Mephisto are left
alone]*

Faust

Faustina ! Call Faustina here !

[Faustina enters that instant]

Let me lean on your shoulder and go You shall read me some Cervantes for an hour And then I will look at the precious drawings of the great Leonardo What have you been doing all this while ?

Faustina

Count Arthur was with me the whole time He says he has an important matter to discuss with you about which he has already written

Faust

Ah I am glad of it—I am glad ! You may go Baron and remember my inexorable command

[Mephisto goes o it]

Faust [sitting down again]

He has matters to discuss with me ? Why do you blush you pale snow white lily ? Thanks be to nature for bestowing on me one pleasant moment after these miserable hours This one shall be marked with a white stone Call Arthur in here call this astrologer and alchemist this crank whom his very relatives will not acknowledge And my little girl smile ! You won't ? Well then go—go and send him here at once

[Faustina goes o it]

Faust [alone]

He is not like his ancestors The Counts Von Stern were all men of blood and iron So too was his brother Siegmund But this younger son not being expected to rule was brought up in seclusion in the shadow of the lofty night cap of Dr Aegyptus and on the death of his brother the boy succeeded to his father's title as simple as he is learned And glory be to Fate that I have hit upon such a man in this thick forest around us amid the roaring heraldic beasts of our

neighbouring nobility ! He has a gentle heart—a poet's heart Where else could I have found such a husband for poor little Faustina ?

[*Enter Arthur, young, handsome, frail-looking and very pale, dressed entirely in black A complex amulet hangs by a golden chain on his chest*]

Faust

Come and sit near me, Count Stern

[*Arthur bows and seats himself*]

Faust

I have read the horoscopes, and your wonderful astrological calculations Yes yes, Jupiter and Venus tell us just what we want, my young friend I believe them ! You and Faustina are predestined mates As far as I can see the planets have been good match makers

Arthur

Did you observe Duke, that in this instance, I have applied a method which has never been set forth in literature and is scarcely known at the present time ? I have no faith in written documents The great alchemists and astrologers did not entrust to letters of the alphabet the real fruits of their deep reflections and indefatigable work even when they sheltered themselves behind mysterious devices and symbols These works were buried with themselves In very truth, these are occult sciences Thus the so called Treatise of Hermes, the thrice greatest master, is an impudent forgery A fact, I assure you, Duke ! But the oral teachings of this semi-divine intellect, handed down from disciple to disciple, did in part reach my great spiritual father, Doctor Aegyptus From him I learned many hidden truths, but I am bound to keep the secret until I am forty-five years of age, and only then may I transmit my knowledge to one disciple of mine, under the same oath

Faust

But you love Faustina ?

Arthur

Hardly had I apprehended in my heart a sweet travail, begotten through the testimony of the crystal in my eyes, than I opined between me and her a kinship. My calculations proved to me that I was not in error. This much I may tell you, Duke. Her number is nine. A splendid number! Her word is PANSAMITKSIX-ADIR*. A remarkable word! And my number is three. Now you understand? And my word is KADIMIKSAPIKSIR*.

Faust

Good! Good! But now we will call Faustina, shall we, my dear fellow? And don't talk astrology to her,—talk of nothing but love, and in words less arduous than those occult terms over which you slide so smoothly.

[*He claps his hands. The Secretary at once appears.*]

Faust

Ask my daughter to come here, my good man.

Arthur

But I surmise that the princess will take some interest in astrology. For in it are combined profound wisdom, incomparable utility, and exalted beauty. As for alchemy, another region in my sphere of knowledge experiments in it I admit, are not always quite devoid of danger. It may happen that the alchemist receives vapours which are hostile to human breath. And, quite recently, one combination of the elements, which I am bound to keep secret, progressed with such an excess of energy that the expanding air hurled me six ells away, and I was sore wounded in that portion of my head where is situated the bump of industry.

Faust [smiling all the time]

You must take care of yourself, Count. Do not make yourself a martyr to excessive love of knowledge. Here is my daughter. Ah, my child!

* Or in Irish PASHICILISDIROY and
IBGLISHAILE-POY.

[*Faustina comes in*]

Faust

Now, speak to her

Arthur [rising and bowing low]

Princess! By the will of those lustrous orbs that circle as celestial beacons—by the will of the constituent elements of our bodies and of our animal and also our rational souls,—by the will of your father, the wisest of princes,—we unite with you for love, spiritual and carnal, and for the procreation of the lineage of the Sterns, whence one day will issue a man who will be crowned Emperor with the Imperial Diadem. This is as certain as the intersection of two lines concurrent on one plane and not parallel. Here is my hand, dear Princess. On it you will easily read the clear demarcation of longevity, the lines denoting the fruitfulness of our marriage and a whole tracery forecasting a tranquil life for us. Princess, give me your desired hand.

[*Faustina bursts into sobs and falls on Faust's neck*]

Faust

My child! my child! These tears—are they for happiness? Leave us a while. Count Arthur

[*Count Stern bows and retires in some confusion*]

Faust

Now tell me—tell me, my child, the reason for these sudden tears

[*Faustina raises her head tries to say something but cannot speak sighs deeply and again hides her face on his breast*]

Faust

Does he not please you? Is he not handsome and young and kind and noble? He is strange that is true but not stupid. No, no Faustina, he is no fool even if his manner of speech is too unusual for you. Calm yourself, my joy! He will make an excellent husband. All the others whom I have considered are such rough loons, that I could not bring myself to

commit your youth to their care Don't cry, don't cry, Faustina ! Come to your own room

[He gently leads her away]

[Mephisto comes in by the lower door He pretends to be seeking something among the books on the table but watches the door as though expecting someone]

Mephisto

Ah, here comes our faithful fledgeling !

[Faustulus enters, evidently disturbed and quickly approaches Mephisto]

Faustulus

I was looking for you

Mephisto

At your service, Prince

[Faustulus leans on the back of a chair with one hand covering his eyes with the other]

Faustulus [in a low voice]

What humiliation !

Mephisto [taking his hand and pressing it to his breast]

Take courage, Prince

Faustulus [standing erect with glistening eyes]

Yes, a Prince ! Prince in every inch of my body, and in a soul overflowing with the princely pride of being a grandson of the King of Spain ! Was not my mother the Infanta ? True, my father was once a mere Knight, but his great services to the empire earned him the ducal title over all his domains, won by him from King Neptune But I have reason to believe that my race springs from the illustrious Roman patrician, Faustus — which means Fortunate, and has nothing to do with the vulgar word *faust*, German for fist Be that as it may, never will I suffer anyone *[in a high scream, stamping his feet]*—anyone—to impugn my dignity as a Prince !

Mephisto

I should like to see such a braggart-fool !

Faustulus

But meanwhile [*flinging himself into an armchair*] what does my father subject me to ? What language those vile brigands used !

Mephisto

Monstrous !

Faustulus

Insufferable, disgusting, Baron !

Mephisto [*sighing*]

Most painful !

Faustulus

The laws of man and God trampled on ! [*With a bitter smile*] But does my father believe in God ? Could he then respect this everlasting scum of society ? He loves playing the democrat—*novus homo*—folly that brought my mother to her grave, the most noble Duchess Elvira [*He broods awhile*]

Mephisto [*quickly and cautiously, shaking his head*]

Yet it still may be, Prince If we only have patience !

Faustulus

You expect more trouble, Baron ?

Mephisto

I do not refer to the girl I promised you I would put that straight and I will keep my word

Faustulus

I am very worried about it But I have every confidence in you Only—I see a wrinkle of perplexity on my wise friend's brow

Mephisto [solemnly]

I was thinking of your future, Prince Dear Prince, not long before your sainted mother departed for another world, where, as I am convinced, she has become the favourite lady in-waiting at the dazzling Court of the Queen of Heaven,—yes, it was in her last hours that your pious mother squeezed my hands in those hot dry hands of hers, and, darting at me a feverish look of appeal, whispered to me with her parched lips “ Oh, keep watch over my son,—keep watch over his crown ! That fool will bring everything to ruin He is a heretic he has sold his soul to Satan , he is only a guest at life s table, playing with all things and all men as his toys Once I even dreamed ”—so did your dying mother confide to me in her agony— ‘ that my husband sat on his cloak, whistled, and flew out of the window ! ’ That is what your poor mother said, the late Duchess Elvira, who—may her memory be for ever blessed !—was a true friend of mine [*He sighs deeply, Faustulus wipes his eyes with a lace handkerchief*] I do all I can I do not sleep I do not swallow one crumb at my ease

But what can I do ? The rabble has been let loose The Duke, I know will assent to the election of Tribunes, and that will be the beginning of the end , from that point it will be a rapid fall And who can tell what terrors may accompany the revolution ? The Duke pays no heed to anything of this sort He is such a great man, you see, that everything else looks small to him, beneath notice Oh forgive me Prince ! Let not your loving filial heart be disturbed within you , but I will disclose my innermost thought Henry Faust once was a great man He was was !

Faustulus [terrified]

What do you mean ?

Mephisto

In his stead there sits now on the throne of the Duchy of Wollentrotz and Trotzburg, an old man, almost a dotard

Mephisto

I should like to see such a braggart-fool !

Faustulus

But meanwhile [*flinging himself into an armchair*] what does my father subject me to ? What language those vile brigands used !

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Faustulus [terrified]

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Mephisto

In his stead there sits now on the throne of the Duchy of Wellentrotz and Trotzburg, an old man, almost a dotard

They will be happy to the verge of madness if the King shall beckon to them with his finger and say, "Your wife—or daughter, or sister, as it may be—is pleasing in my eyes, go and speak with my equerry!"

Faustulus

And I shall marry Dona Inez. Royal blood flows in her veins, she is pretty, serious, educated and stern.

Oh, we shall introduce an almost religious etiquette at Court.

Mephisto [craftily]

And all the more delightful will it be after midnight, when Queen Inez has been conducted to her apartments by six ladies in waiting, for you to remain in a cosy room with a glass of Syracusan at your side, and listen to ribald songs from rosy lips, to banter some frightened little bourgeois virtue, or experiment on Eastern beauty.

Faustulus

How I love you, Baron! You might be my father!

Mephisto [frowning]

Don't talk like that, my Faustulus. You do not know what sore spot in my soul you are chafing. Oh, Dona Elvira, Dona Elvira!—mistress!—Beatrice of my poor heart. Ah, here comes the wine! Let us enliven ourselves a little and take heart of mirth.

[The servant places the wine and glasses on the table. Mephisto pours a thick liquid into the cut glass, dismisses the servant with a nod, and with a playful gesture invites Faustulus.]

Faustulus [timidly]

Won't father be coming in?

Mephisto

No, he will not. [They drink.] Now, a word about your little girl. Are you very much in love with her?

Faustulus

Madly! That's the trouble, a very sea of motley passions seethes in my breast!

[He strikes his narrow chest with his hand.]

Faustulus

Can this be ?

Mephisto

That is the bitter truth, Greatness has dazzled him
He is enamoured of himself, like a new Narcissus, and
this unending self worship has turned his brain A
Narcissus, without hair on his temple, grey, doddering—
and in love with his own beauty ! And all this while I
know another giant, whom these pitiful fragments of
former greatness hold down

Faustulus

Who is that ?

Mephisto

Prince, it is you ! [*In a prophetic tone*] Make ready !
Soon will a secret voice speak in your ears and say
' Arise oh son of Spain, arise for a mighty feat, gaze
on your star with unfaltering eyes, and go forth, spare
no one, for you are born to accomplish great things,
you will found a mighty kingdom ! "

Faustulus

I already often hear such voices [*Stares in front of
him fixedly*] And I am a-feared

Mephisto

Dare to be bold !

[*Claps his hands A servant enters*]

Come, drink a glass of Syracusan with me, my boy !
Believe me my darling, I am your support, have no
fear ! Meanwhile, swallow these petty rebuffs Oh,
what a reckoning we will have one day with all these
Scotts and Hans's !

Faustulus

Ah—that we will !

Mephisto

They will crawl on their stomachs to the throne of King
Faustulus !

[*Faustulus laughs and rubs his hands*]

They will be happy to the verge of madness if the King shall beckon to them with his finger and say, "Your wife—or daughter, or sister, as it may be—is pleasing in my eyes, go and speak with my equerry!"

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Madly! That's the trouble a very sea of motley passions seethes in my breast!

[He strikes his arrow chest with his hand]

Mephisto

A foretokening that the eaglet's wings are growing !
I toast the slender waist and luscious bosom of Mademoiselle Ortruda !

Faustulus

To my success !—Is she in Wotusberg ?

Mephisto

Yes as we arranged Still, some dexterity will be needed You see though my men seized this little burgher Amazon quite unawares and succeeded in hauling her out of bed with nothing more than a night-gown on her all the same she happened to be armed to be wearing on her breast a splendid Toledan stiletto in a little scabbard—and very sharp Though the blade was only a few inches long it could scratch anyone to death No sooner was she unloosed than she leapt into the corner like a little tigress and cried out “If anyone touches me I will plunge this little toy into my heart !

Faustulus [nervously]

And—she might really do it ?

Mephisto

She might Hers is a churlish nature She is so full of blood and vigour that death does not seem at all terrifying to her Such creatures kill themselves with a smile half curious half gay just as if their childish suicide were a triumph of life and not of death They are utterly unlike persons of refined and cultured temperament such as yours who realise the value of life, grip it tight and would rather submit to any contumely than part company with sweet life even if it has become nothing more than one continuous foul disease That lofty aristocratic love of life is quite alien to these coarser fibres which are so very near to nature

Faustulus

But then, I fear,—

Mephisto

Fear nothing ! I tell you, you are the Prince, a sensible fellow, and a pretty fellow Ortruda is a free, passionate, and even voluptuous girl Can she hold out against you ? Only don't try to win anything by force ! I will put things straight with your father Very soon the bolts of his anger will find other pinnacles to lay low Drink, Faustulus, son of my soul !

Faustulus

To all of your schemes, my great friend !

Mephisto [affectionately stroking his cheek]

My boy what shall we not be able to make of you ! I am so much more at ease with you than with the old man In you there pulses the fiery blood of the royal house, the heritage of generations of noble infirmities However, two glasses of wine in that slush which flows in your veins, work destructively Your nose already looks like a Greek fig your eyes like pewter buttons You are pretty, my boy ! *[He laughs raucously]*

Faustulus [laughing and lunging out at him]

A jester

Mephisto

Why shouldn't I be your jester ?

[Faustina enters and stands astounded]

Faustina

What is going on here ?

[She meets Mephisto's glance is confused and lowers her eyes]

Faustina

Father had forgotten his Romance of Don Quixote I came to get it for him *[She is going, but suddenly turns round abruptly]* Faustulus, do not anger your father !

*Mephisto [who has been following her all the time
jeeringly]*

Do you yourself, Princess, take care not to anger him,
when Gabriel starts gadding about with a girl! You
understand?

Faustina [looking at him with horror and disgust]

What do you mean by this?

Mephisto

Oh, you understand me, Princess!

Faustina

You are drunk, my lord

Mephisto

His Highness will be very angry indeed. You are Count
Stern's bride. His Highness has already decided that
Then, all at once. Fie! fie! How ugly it looks!
And such a modest little maiden!

Faustulus [hiccoughing]

My sister is a a little noodle!

Mephisto

Go to sleep, Prince!—But you, go to your father, to
your father! You must be more gentle with him.
For you, the sweetest of all daughters, are preparing to
stab him to the heart. All you need do is to reveal to
him the secret of your love—yes, only that!—and the
poor old man will be killed!

*[Faustina says nothing but her head droops to her bosom. Mephisto
crosses his arms and glares at her triumphantly. Faustulus
spills the wine on the edge of his glass and grunts.]*

CURTAIN

SCENE II

[*Early morning. A small room austere and simply furnished. A faint light comes through the window. A writing desk with papers and drawings in orderly arrangement. Bookshelves. A large portrait of Faust. Someone knocks at the outer door. Gabriel comes from his bedroom opposite, without coat or waistcoat.*]

Gabriel

Who is there? [*Opens the door.*]

Pieter [*rushing in*]

Master! Such doings! The devil only knows what is going on in Trotzburg to-night—and you in bed!

Gabriel

What is it? What is it, Pieter? Don't talk while you're out of breath. Sit down and take your time.

Pieter

Don't talk? Now is the time to talk! Good or bad news, I don't know which! Phew!

Gabriel

Just take your time and speak clearly!

Pieter

The City's up in arms!

Gabriel

In arms?

Pieter

Yes, our oppressors have lived to see it! Listen, master! Last night, they say, Big Hans had assembled a gang of rowdy 'prentices at the Applegarden. He wanted to plan an attack on Faustulus at Villa Corona, to rescue Ortruda. They knew she was there. It was a regular row, that meeting. That ragged old man and his wife who have been stirring up feeling against the rich and the government—they were there. He was shouting even louder than Hans. Then all at once who enters the tavern but Ortruda herself! They were dumb

founded ! Then she told her story All our suspicions were correct, if was Faustulus had carried her off, but she had defended herself like a tigress Oh, our Ortrud is no timid one ! I can see that boy Faustulus facing her claws ! Yes, she had been threatened and cajoled, and then, in the night, Alguacil Mephisto came to her and suggested she should escape He said he didn't want to be between two fires—the son and the father, so he had decided to help her to escape But it wasn't in gratitude she told them ! Her return, so far from calming them, threw oil on the fire Some of them were going off to get muskets and hawberks and torches, when—another surprise !—the whole of the inn was found to be surrounded by lancers of the Swiss Regiment ! Faustulus had openly and insolently come to recapture Ortruda Then even the timid fell into line Old Rebble pulled out a poniard from his pocket and shouted "Let us die rather than show ourselves cowardly curs !" But our fellows had very few weapons Then Hans who as you know, had been harping on his idea of single combat, ran out into the courtyard, brandishing his sword, and shouted "Faustulus, if you have in your blood one drop of manhood, come and fight me !" Faustulus was just riding up He answered "At your service,"—pulled out his pistol, and before you had time to draw breath, fired, and Hans fell—dead "Cut this rabble down !" Faustulus ordered There were a whole lot of the Switzers They had pikes and sabres It was a butchery ! The news spread over the town As soon as I heard it, I ran with all my 'prentices to the Apple-garden The inn was on fire, we could hear the clang of steel and occasional shots Did you hear nothing ? The tocsin was rung from St George's

Gabriel

I worked late last night and slept very heavily, yet, somehow, something did disturb my dreams

Peter

Within an hour the Switzers themselves were surrounded by the 'prentice bands, Mynheer Scott in command

Gabriel

Ah he !

Pieter

Then Baron Mephisto appeared, delivered a speech, and led the lancers off with more threats That's all I know The master-craftsmen are assembling at the Town Hall The merchants are also meeting at the Golden House All the prentices are in arms

[Gabriel is silent, thinking]

I was sent, Mynheer Gabriel, to ask you to come at once to the Town Hall

Gabriel

The Duke will punish the guilty I thought the Duke had settled the whole affair Yes, but would the City now be satisfied with a formal punishment of Faustus? To chastise one's own son when circumstances demand, as the elder Brutus did of old This conflict of authority is most inopportune

[The door is flung open Scott enters hurriedly He wears steel armour and a helmet top boots and spurs]

Gabriel

You, here? But, Pieter You had better go downstairs, Pieter

[Pieter goes out]

Scott

Friend, it is accomplished! The City is up in arms! The villainess of the son outweighs the merits of the father, overshadowed as those were by his pigheadedness This is the end of ducal authority!

Gabriel

I know that civil war has blazed up, but I do not know why you are so confident of victory There are the seven thousand lancers or more in the City the artillery at the Fortress of Sant' Angelo, and the countless agents of Baron Mephisto . .

Scott

Early this morning I captured the Fortress of Sant' Angelo and the cannon, and had nearly seized the treasury,—and then I should have bribed the lancers into neutrality. The whole people is raging, everyone is in arms. Thousands of men, and even a few women, are assembled in front of the Cathedral. Against Trotzburg in arms the Lancers are a mere handful.

Gabriel

Certainly from a military point of view you have acted wisely. But need we, perhaps, have gone to such lengths?

Scott

First and foremost, we must have our adversary on his knees, before we begin parleying.

Gabriel

You are very far from that. The Duke with his foreign connections can very easily raise against us a host of enemies, and besiege Trotzburg with the troops of neighbouring princes. And, inside the City, what will be happening? The 'prentices will demand an instant fulfilment of their Labour Charter, the masters will be obdurate, and

Scott

In view of the military danger, the prentices will give way. When danger threatens all alike the lower classes always give way to the upper.

Gabriel

And even if discontent with the merchants comes to a head, will it be so serious? Those profiteers take all the pickings—the people demand their expulsion—very well as long as there is no pilfering of the warehouses. On the other hand, the merchants, if they remove their ships and their goods and cut off our trade, will very soon bring Trotzburg into a parlous plight. The Dukedom of Trotzburg is not self supporting. I foresee many other difficulties. And at such a time, to have

no Faust! He is arrogant in his genius, his schemes are often laborious, even impracticable and it isn't always smooth sailing with the people, but who can deny the wisdom of this sovereign? And if you come to that is there any other city in the world as prosperous as Trotzburg?

Scott

These are quite inopportune reflections!

Gabriel

On the contrary There is only one way out—to come to terms with Faust

Scott

We must come to terms with the Golden House The merchants will pay a higher trade tax somewhat reduce the rate of interest and lower the price of imports, especially of bread I have always explained to them that they had better diminish their prodigious profits by a fifth rather than risk losing everything in an insurrection—and all the trade of Trotzburg for years to come And after some years I told them Trotzburg would be able to manage its own mercantile fleet It is with this threat of a fleet of its own belonging to Trotzburg that Faust has been able to keep them in bounds We can do the same

Gabriel

Friend Faust's threats were hallucinations but he had more credence than we could ever command You will find it easy to lower the price of bread But once the people is master the merchants will hardly manage to escape with whole skins by surrendering let alone one fifth but four fifths of their income

Scott

I undertake to convince the prentices I repeat the common danger of war is a powerful factor We must be gentle with the merchants stand by the master craftsmen and keep the prentices with us but as to mutineers with no fixed occupations—we must simply

arrest them I shall easily find a pretext for imprisoning old Rebble and his band of gypsies, scavengers, and seamen And Hans—he was my brother-in-law, but—speaking as a politician—his death very greatly facilitates our task The City must become a Republic, but of course in a time of such general danger we must have persons of authority in command

Gabriel

Perhaps only one ?

Scott

We will compromise on two Tribunes Hans, though the idol of the craftsmen, would by now have been superfluous

Gabriel

Scott, do you really think you are speaking like a politician ? Do not confuse wisdom with wiliness, courage with foolhardiness, idealism with ambition Let us go to the Town Hall and send a delegation to Faust with a petition to him to remain in the City as ruler but to limit his power by submitting it to the control of a popular assembly, the decisions of which shall be reported to him by two Tribunes Then we shall settle all current questions from the punishment of Faustulus down to the demands of the people without any great ado The authority of the Duke will cover us all

Scott

Oh ! You and Faust—you will come to an agreement ? Authority ? Yes ! And, on the other hand, leniency and caution ? And—Faust is generous and pliable ! Oh, the two of you !

Gabriel

William Scott, here is my hand You are esteemed for your sense, your resolution, your eloquence I also esteem you Will you take part in this triumvirate, which will be a transitional stage to a greater degree of popular sovereignty ? If so, shake hands But your scheme—it is not acceptable to me You would rely

on the merchants, you would build up a militia faithful to you and in your pay, and become dictator in the Duke's stead—that is your scheme I should fight against it I do not want to exchange Faust for you Trotzburg would never agree to it, possibly the merchants and the rich guilds might, because they would see in it a chance for their own predominance We understand each other Your hand, then,—or do we fight?

Scott

Why such suspicions? I am just as good a republican and democrat as you And, furthermore, how could I fight you? Does not the whole people regard you as an upright man? If you withdraw your hand from mine, who will not do likewise?

Gabriel

Neither I, nor you, nor even the great Faust himself, is what matters now Trotzburg alone matters Trotzburg must be the pioneer of the new State, a great brotherhood of the workers A sublime ideal, hard of attainment, needing time and caution to be realised It would be a crime should we now by any blunder narrow or obscure the horizon But, my friend, caution does not mean submitting the power of the City to a golden oligarchy Or do you think that we have no choice between a dummy despot and a sack of gold? Were it so, I should not hesitate Were there no other alternative anything were better than a monarchy But this Faust is no mere monarch, no mere crowned head, he is of all men the greatest and most enlightened, and one who loves us The crown here is but an impediment His power—it is the power of genius Now, we are faced with this problem we do not want this power, because we want freedom Freedom is greater than Faust But, to exchange Faust for Isaac Segal, or Justus Pfefferschalk, or for a council of fat-bellied masters of rich guilds—no I had rather die than suffer that Trotzburg free—that or nothing! And I see in the future this free Trotzburg, her freedom served also by her father—Faust

Scott

You shall be the speaker at the Town Hall, and to the people. I will be silent.

Gabriel

Your hand !

[He presses Scott's hand and smiles happily. Scott remains cold]

CURTAIN

SCENE III

[*The Fountain Square* On one side, the Masons' Guildhall, a grey, late Gothic building, with a tower in the centre. On the opposite side of the square, the State Treasury, guarded by four militia men wearing casques, and carrying arquebuses, marching to and fro slowly along a vaulted gallery. The edifice is ponderous in style built of dark stone, with graced windows. At the far end of the Square, a Gothic Church with belfry. In the centre of the Square a large fountain, representing Fortune with a cornucopia out of which a stream of water gushes in fan shape into a wide basin, the sides of which are covered with allegorical reliefs. The fountain stands on a broad square platform with seven granite steps leading up to it.]

The Square is crowded with the people in arms. Apprentices of various guilds mix with them. There are a fair number of women, some of them also armed. Children are pushing through the crowd. There is a hum of voices, a distant beating of drums, and through it all an agitated tolling of bells from the belfry. The Town-crier mounts the platform of the fountain. He is dressed in black, with the arms of Trotzburg—an ocean wave breaking against a tower—embroidered on his breast.]

Town-Crier

Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!

[*Scott comes in and waves his hat in command. Four masons bring in the body of Hans, wrapped in a black cloak, on a ladder as a stretcher, set it over against the steps and take the cap off the head exposing the blood-stained face. There is a stir in the crowd, followed by a dead silence.*]

Scott [*speaking very loudly*]

Citizens of Trotzburg, most mighty Guilds, rescuers of this land from the sea, and founders in a quarter of a century of a city which is the admiration of the world! The son of the Duke of this land, Prince Faustus, abducted the sister of our dear friend Hans and daughter of the old master Wahrhaft—he who laid the first stones of our Cathedral and Town Hall. When the girl escaped from him, the prince pursued her with his company of mercenaries and assassins, and killed her brother who was defending her.

[*A great sensation in the crowd, and then another silence as of the grave.*]

We are going to demand a trial of the murderer But who shall be his judge? His friend and debaucher, our monstrous Alguacil the abomination of our land? Or his deputy Judge van der Hoog, a stupid pedant and faithful lapdog of any tyrant? Or the Duke? But the Duke is his father Our institutions and customs in this city are much belauded They are better than those of our neighbours, but how many insults remain unavenged how many acts of oppression unredressed, how many petitions unheard! We honour the Duke, but let him honour us! He built Trotzburg—and we also built Trotzburg! In this at least we are equal. Yet he commits us to the charge of his deputies, as though we were senseless animals

[A roar of applause follows these last words]

Faust is wise the Guilds are also wise! And they wish to become as illustrious free, and rich as Faust himself! How often has this been discussed! How often have the Guilds agitated for two Tribunes, to be elected by all the working people who built this country and this City—Tribunes co regent with the Duke, and strictly subordinate to the Popular Assembly This has long been our aspiration the City carries it under its heart, as a mother carries her child But our child is denied the right of birth The Duke insists upon being sole despot But we have grown up, we know our rights we know our power, and we declare—we, Great Trotzburg—that, after the events of last night, we can no longer consent to be thus governed

[A storm of applause]

The Crowd

Great Trotzburg! Long live the Workers! Trotzburg!

[Banners are waved drums beaten trumpets sounded]

Town Crier

Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!

Hunt [standing by Scott]

Listen mighty people, your dawn is at hand!

[The crowd stirs with emotion]

Scott

If he who is wise and good thus afflict us, how shall we fare under his successor? Do you not see how the Alguacil is preparing for us fetters and slavery?

The Crowd

Down with him!—He is the devil himself, and everybody knows it!—Down with Baron Mephisto!

[A loud hissing and booing from all parts]

Scott

Citizens, without waiting for anyone or anything, let us at once elect two Tribunes, and send them to the Duke *Faust*, as his peers, to discuss with him our troubles and our rights. Great Trotzburg will speak through their mouths with its first citizen, and not as a slave to his master.

[Exclamations of joy and pride]

The Crowd

Yes, yes! Bravo, William Scott! Long live the Tribunes!

Scott

Citizens, we have already consulted at the Town Hall with the assembly of Masters. As the Master of the Free Masons, whom you all esteem, Gabriel van Bond, told us there, the Masters now suggest that you should elect him and myself as Tribunes. Do you approve?

The Crowd

Yes, yes! Hurrah for Scott! Hurrah for Van der Bond!

[The shouting continues for some time]

Scott

Do you all agree to these names, William Scott and Gabriel van der Bond, free citizens?

[Loud applause]

The Crowd

Agreed ! agreed !

Rebble [*pushing forward and standing on a low step of the fountain*]

I demand to speak !

Scott

Are you a citizen ?

Rebble

A citizen of the world ! I demand to speak ! [*He mounts two steps higher*] Trotzburg, oh city of my heart, my beloved people, you have awakened ! Act now, promptly unhesitatingly, ruthlessly ! It is yet morning By midday be there not left alive one rich man, not one fat paunch with unslit gullet ! Carry their furniture out into the square, their heaped up piles of gold, and let these two Tribunes assign to every man an equal portion And go—seize Faustulus, and hand him over to me ! I will make you laugh ! But the old man, set him backward on an ass, and let him go seek other fools like unto him for his lacqueys

[*Vague murmurs in the crowd Waves moving irregularly and spreading disorderly The rhythm is broken*]

Scott [*decisively*]

Enough of this ! Comrades,—workers, we have no time to listen to the evil chatter of this dotard

Rebble [*not understanding*]

What was that ?

Scott

Go away, go away, old man ! We have to build up our cause, not destroy it Nobody here will listen to you We are not brute-beasts just unmanacled, but men who proudly and boldly establish their freedom

[*Murmurs of applause the waves beginning at the fountain and extending over the whole Square concentrically*]

Rebble [confused]

What is that song ?

[Gabriel mounts the steps, gently takes him by the shoulder and leads him away from the stretcher]

Envie [in the front rank, waving her rags and shrieking]

People, oh people ! Behold how these sage masters of yours would steal the people's fortune Once the hour of freedom has struck, once the soldiery has failed, let everyone take what he can from the rich ! Each man's takings are his for this once ! Isn't that right, brothers and sisters ?

Gabriel [calmly]

Do not disturb us, do not disturb us, old woman ! Pieter, just take her a little aside

Scott

Citizens, each to his Guild ! Remain under arms ! The military command I take upon myself Comrades, for to-day obey the orders of the authorities you have elected—to-morrow you shall order them—to be beheaded, if that be our desert

[Loud applause which becomes sustained in a solemn shout of resolve All begin to go out in orderly fashion as though their duties were self evident Serious looks everywhere knitted brows and hands that grip the weapons tightly]

Hunt

Listen, ye people ! *[He beats a drum, and then declaims in a loud voice]*

Our sovereign city, roused in might,
In Titan strength to reign,—
King Troitzburg in the morning light
Shall throne it o'er the plain !

Before his power the waves have fled
That made his native land,
And magical on that sea-bed
His palaces now stand.

Now Freedom stirs his giant mind
 In all its thousand heads,
 And Unity, all hearts to bind
 With ever-living threads

And he shall tell the Duke Still lead,—
 First citizen thereby,
 Be first among your peers indeed,
 But sovereign—that am I !
 I, one and all, I breathe in all,
 In all I toil, I sing

Feel you my strength ? In thunder-call
 Hear you my laughter ring ?
 Strange, wonderful, no dream it is—
 To power the Titan grown !
 King Trotzburg o'er this land of his,
 Now rears his royal throne

Oh, louder, prouder ring my voice !
 Full rapture hear me sing
 And in thy golden dawn rejoice,
 Trotzburg, my Titan-King !

To arms, citizens ! To arms ! Either he is born,
 to-day, your fiery giant, who lives in each of you,
 eternal and victorious, or this dream shall pass away—
 holy, marvellous and terrible as it is ! City, my City,
 glory to thee ! In thy honour thy drummer, Gunther
 Hunt, beats his drum !

*[He beats the drum with all his might A beating of drums answers
 him from many sides A thunderous chorus of voices chant
 the song]*

Our sovereign city, roused in might,
 In Titan strength to reign,—
 King Trotzburg in the morning light
 Shall throne it o'er the plain !

*[Faces are radiant, the ocean of heads moves in rhythmic waves
 eyes in excitement look straight ahead some men embrace
 The drums roll and the song echoes harmoniously]*

CURTAIN

SCENE IV

[*The orangery in Faust's palace, full of orange trees and palms. It is a hot summer day. The broad windows are wide open. A big cockatoo and two bright coloured parrots are squawking and turning somersaults. Other rare birds. Under the palms, on a semi circular marble bench of classical style, Faust, in a long velvet cloak with a gold belt sits reading holding a little book with a printed leather cover at a great distance from his long sighted eyes. At his feet lies a snow white greyhound.*

Faustina enters, wearing a long white dress her hair down and clasped in a little pearl brooch. She is carrying a silver tray with a golden goblet filled with a cooling draught.]

Faust

Just listen to this, my little girl

Ed era il cielo all' armonia sì intento
Che non si vedea in ramo mover foglia,
Tanta dolcezza avean pien l'aere e 'l vento

And to the harmony heaven so intent was that no leaf there rustled on its bough, so full the air and wind of sweetest scent

[*He drinks from the goblet.*]

Thus do I, giving you in marriage, return to Petrarch. Well, I too have loved [*A moment's pause.*] But when I loved I did not read Petrarch. I did not even write sonnets. Passion welled up and boiled over in me, and could not mould itself into beautiful form. Come and sit beside me, my young delight

[*Faustina sits down beside him.*]

But, now, in this wonderful summer, on these plains thick set with poplars, in the park of the Falcon Tower, among its fountains, in the Palace garden with its statues and here in these enchanting tents of the distant sultry South, I dream of love as of a distant shore. No, not for myself. After hard thinking over plans and designs, after rigorous work at my man of iron, whenever I want to rest I think of you, your youth and beauty the sensations awaiting you so

utterly strange and fresh and unexpected, and then the sensuous stanzas of Petrarch come back to me, rising up as from the depths of my memory. When I am weary but with you, I live again in dreams the days of my love, just as I hope to live yet again with your children in those golden clouds that are the happy season of life, sweet childhood

[He strokes her bowed head]

But you, Faustina? You do not look as though you were in love. On the contrary, I read some hidden trouble in your eyes. Come, you know you will still be with me. Count Stern has taken up his residence in my palace. And I, always ready to build, am planning a great reconstruction. I will build you a sweet little nest near to me. We shall not be parted. *[A pause]* One moment more of peace. Then, back to my workshop. Ah, my iron man, somehow I fancy I have found you a soul!

[He closes his eyes and rests his head on the lofty marble back of the bench. Faustina looks at him with tears in her eyes, then impulsively kisses him on his forehead and hand]

Faust [opening his eyes and smiling]

What a violent young thing!

Faustina

Oh, my father, the great Faust!

Faust

My child, what I have accomplished so far is but little. Don't you be echoing the flatterers with your "great Faust." I must go on—go forward to the end. Do you know, child, that I am often deeply grieved?

Father!

Faustina

Faust

Yes, yes,—deeply grieved! I have built much, I am still building, and I shall go on building. But I am concerned that those who help me, and bear on their

shoulders the most ungracious and burdensome part of the work, should be—well, more or less comfortable and contented. But they are so poor, so submissive, and they age so early. I have reduced the hours of labour, they now only work nine hours a day—I have instituted two shifts, even this is arduous enough. And I pay them well. But can I make them rich? Can they travel, broaden their minds by reading and art? Can they educate their children as I have you? Can I give them those myriad things they call luxury? And yet, to my mind, every real man must have luxury as the air he breathes. No, I cannot do these things! To bring this about I should have to compel by force or by alchemist's gold all the rest of the world to support my city with tribute of labour. Or else to render the labour here less arduous, so that they themselves should produce a hundredfold more. We are poor, *Faustina*, we are poor! We have to work too hard, too coarsely, at labour too servile and too harsh! Whereas every man was born to be a creator, a happy master and lord.

That kindly rogue, that sea wolf with a heart of marble, suggests that we should erect our white man's paradise on the bowed backs of negroes. Think of it! We are to live in brilliant halls replete with cheer and creativeness and the glitter of mental attainments. Yes,—but go down to the cellars and you are in Hell, where men, gnashing their teeth, obey the orders of men, and perish with rotting muscles, broken limbs, ruptured veins, pounded to death against the iron resistance of matter! Horrible! Even the animals, even the beasts, *Faustina*, I would not imprison down in that hole forever. *Faustina* they say I am cruel. Yes, yes, I know they say I am cruel,—for instance, in the matter of draining that marsh, where fever slays its legions. But, in spite of that, I have a tender heart. I sometimes dream of a little ass, a patient little martyr ass, prematurely old and disconsolate through bearing burdens beyond its strength. And the little ass looks at me in mute reproach. "All beings thirst for redemption," said the sage of Tarsus.

Yet, truly, this weakness of mine would be con-

temptible, and my Viking Niklaas would do well to ridicule me—he is a man of ice and fire like the Northern lights—did not my compassion guide me to creativeness And that, little daughter, is why I have decided to make iron men—men of iron that, without living, yet can work

No, I have not gone mad nor am I a magician, as some stupid people say I have already devised a body for this iron servant, there remained only the soul, the energy And you must know that these are days of triumph for me for I have discovered a soul for him! His soul shall be steam! Ha-ha ha! You think I have gone quite mad my child? Yes, steam! Water under the influence of fire expands, and if

[He gets up with blazing eyes and gesticulates]

[Mephistopheles enters]

Mephisto

Ah, here is His Highness! You are wanted, Duke! There is a revolt in the City Armed bands have already seized the Treasury, the supplies of cannon and arms at the castle of Sant Angelo—in a word, all they required for the occasion Before you give me orders to lead the lancers against them and annihilate the whole of the frenzied mob, you, to satisfy your repute as a humanitarian, will have to endeavour to persuade the ring leaders to put an end to this tumult But their purpose in coming here is to persuade you to abdicate your authority

Faust

What raving—what nonsense is this?

Mephisto

Here they are!

[The Secretary ushers in Gabriel and Scott]

Secretary

In accordance with your Highness' instructions, I am admitting these persons to you, as the matter will not brook delay

Faust

Do you all leave me Leave me alone with them !

[All except Faust and the two Tribunes go out]

Faust [angrily]

So—you have decided on a rebellion ?

Gabriel [calmly]

I hope you will hear us out—especially as we shall be brief

Faust [sitting down]

Speak !

Gabriel

Last night your son, in chase of the girl who had escaped from his clutches, who had been abducted by him, killed her brother Hans

Faust [springing to his feet]

Truly ?—Go, then and tell the people to keep calm The murderer shall be punished You hear ! Faust has said it I shall know how to be just—to be a just judge of my own children He shall be punished, had I to pluck out my right eye even as I tear Faustus out of my heart !

Gabriel

First, oh Duke, hear us out You, the wisest of all mortal men, will at last understand that Trotzburg has grown up and wants to be free It will no longer tolerate patrons, guardians and lords It wants to look you in the face as its first citizen, its consul Retain the title of Duke, if it so please you But the City insists on your taking into your counsel two Tribunes, answerable to the people You see these two Tribunes before you now Duke, I implore you, do not let anger blind the far vision of your genius We shall be modest, Duke We shall be loyal colleagues We recognise the difference that separates us from you—not because you are the Duke—that is a mere word—but because

you are Henry Faust and we are of the humble rank and file of the workers. But we stand nearer to the people, your work will proceed much better through us than through that monstrous Alguacil, Mephisto, whom you have set between yourself and the people.

Faust

Gabriel William,—how can your advice help me? You are children—you are not yet born, mentally. Very well, then, I make you my counsellors, but it will be a farce that will waste my golden hours.

Scott

No, Duke, that is not enough. You will have to take an oath before the people that you will undertake nothing against which we two shall set our veto, and you will do all whereon we shall unitedly insist.

Faust

Ah? And that means that the government—will be you!

Gabriel

Duke, Duke do not be hasty! I repeat, we shall know our place.

Faust

No, no, no! It is just this childish presumption that is the source of these fresh discords. No! No! Let the people cool their breath and go back to work. No,—that is my answer! And I shall suppress rebellion by force.

Gabriel

Think, Duke, think again! Your words are pregnant with disaster.

Scott

You mean to use force? We, also, are prepared for that. Nor shall we look backward. You want blood? It shall flow.

Faust

On your heads be it!

Scott

So be it, then ! We shall be proud to write our names
in history in the purple of our blood, shed in Liberty's
cause It brands only the tyrant's brow

Faust

You fools, I shall destroy you utterly, and all of this
city, like an ant heap, and build myself another

Scott

Be Trotzburg free, or let it perish !

[Faust moves away from them and stands still reflecting]

Faust

One moment for thought I loathe bloodshed !

[He presses his hands to his brow]

Make this experiment Vidcant ipsi consules
I can make good their errors afterwards I must, in
any case devote all my present powers to my iron man

[He approaches them]

Tribunes of the People ! We will try an experiment
Rule in conjunction with you I cannot and will not
Make your choice, then Either I am sole sovereign of
Wellentrotz and Trotzburg, or do you govern without
me I will withdraw to foreign lands and make a new
life I shall not become poor by losing the duchy, but
look to it lest you beggar yourselves by losing me

Gabriel

Do not insist on this, Duke It is too hard a choice !

Scott

But it has been decided in advance Better freedom
with all its perils, than the wisest of monarchs !

Faust

Are you so sure, my young Scotsman, that the people
is of your mind ?

Scott

At this moment ? Yes ! Should they recant later, no doubt they will beseech your gracious return, and offer you our heads as a tribute

Faust [cheerily]

Gabriel, this is your man of action ! Have an eye on him ! You are a proper honourable democrat, but his eyes are already glittering

Gabriel

In him at this moment are centred the rays of light and heat of all Trotzburg

Faust

Take over the government, then !

[As the Tribunes bow the door is flung open and Faustulus in a bristling rage bursts in followed by Mephisto who is scowling and irritated]

You—you criminal ! You have the insolence to show yourself here, before my very eyes !

Faustulus

Criminal ? Not I, but you, my father !

Faust

You, the murderer of poor Hans —that fine, gifted lad !

Faustulus

I swear by the Almighty Creator I slew him without intent and in lawful self defence whoever asserts the contrary is a liar and perjurer But you—you ! You would dare to surrender your crown to these burghers—a crown that doesn't belong to you ! Never—never would the Emperor have bestowed upon you the duchy of these flourishing lands, but for your marriage with my mother, the Infanta Elvira, for none has better title to these territories than the Royal House of mighty Spain You are the ruler of the land for life, but I, your heir ancestor of all the Dukes to come, I tell you—I swear by God—there is not one Prince, nearby or afar,

who will hesitate to lend me succour against your decision for you are setting all Europe a pernicious example Recall your decision—I demand this !

Faust

Prince, Faust never takes back his word

Faustulus [beyond himself]

Then listen father ! There is such a thing as consecrated rebellion and such will be my revolt against you ! The voice of Heaven the vow of immemorial order summons me ! Me none will condemn ! I shall take my place at the head of my troops and I will subjugate to myself the City you abandon I swear this by the Mother of God and Saint James Patron of Spain !

Faust

Gently gently ! You are blowing off like a volcano

Faustulus

Through me are speaking my ancestors and my descendants

Mephisto [smiling venomously]

He also is elemental Your Highness !

Scott [impatiently]

The City has grown up! The City will deal with all its enemies! Let the Duke bid his heralds trumpet and proclaim his abdication in the City, the castles, the villages and the hamlets. We ask no more! Trotzburg will never acknowledge the sovereignty of Faustulus.

Faustulus

It will, insolent bricklayer! I will plant an iron heel upon your head!

[Scott shrugs his shoulders]

Faust [sitting on his bench]

Pitiful—pitiful! Thus, then, life is to march on with angry stride, and demands of me that I move out of the way. But it is plainly leading to a trackless waste of hillocks and briars. Pitiful!—So you have grown up, my children,—my son Faustulus and my son Trotzburg! And you want to separate and no longer obey your aged father? Well,—so be it! I wash my hands of it all. *[He makes the appropriate gesture]* But not like Pilate, giving over the Lamb of God to chastisement—for I swear not one of you resembles a lamb. Ha, ha! You have grown up, you are men? So be it! I grieve for you—for the blood, the blood so eager to be poured forth,—for the strength that will be vainly spent. But, as ye wish—so be it! Let life proceed on its angry way whither it will. I step aside, my prodigal sons! For the last time, I ask you, Gabriel, as a sensible man, resolute even in your dreams—for the last time I ask you—Choose! Either I remain as of old, absolute monarch of this City and Land, or the heralds shall trumpet and announce that Henry Faust has abdicated the Dukedom without nominating a successor.

Gabriel

If such the alternatives, Duke, with crushed heart and constrained breast, yet with faith in my people and confidence in the triumph of right, I pronounce for the
and choice

Scott [with a sigh of relief]

Ah !

Faust

Faustulus my son will you in obedience to your father go hence for many years travelling the whole world over, learning and expanding your mind ? I give you my word I will do all that lies in my power for your happiness Or will you fight for the Ducal crown that I have renounced and shed blood ?

Faustulus [hysterically]

I will not renounce the crown ! I will not ! I will not !

Faust

Ye have chosen ! From the heights of the Falcon Tower I shall survey this comedy of sin Your childish scuffle afflicts my heart But you will learn ! You will learn from experience if you will not heed advice The heralds shall proclaim the news Faustulus I shall not put any obstacles in your way Tribunes of the People you do not desire of me that I after conceding you everything should remove the stones from under your feet ?

Scott

In the City's name we express to you our gratitude Conflict with you great man would have spelt for us a splendid ruin at most conflict with others does not frighten us

Faustulus

Let us hear what tune you will pipe on the field of battle

Faust

But perhaps you stay with me ?

Faustulus

To be sure indeed

Meplio

I I once Your Highness

Faust

Well, what then? Whoever's pride shall be broken, I shall be right, oh you hapless, haughty children! To day I shall betake myself to the Falcon Tower That is my own Woe betide whoever there assail me!

[*Gabriel bows*]

Faust [majestically]

Now go, my poor children! You, too, Faustulus,—and you, Baron!

[*They all bow and go out leaving Faust alone*]

Faust

It all smells so sweet! Yet men, whose lot on earth you would think was hard enough already, are preparing themselves for a savage conflict But I see words have no weight with them—Iron fisted Fate, so far thou hast conquered! Teach them reason with them, on thy hard path lead my straying children back to me!—The tragedy of it!—Yet I have three treasures left to me for my support—my beautiful Faustina, my iron man and my faith that the others will all return to me To work then, Faust! Await your hour, and create!

[*He walks out slowly*]

[*Mephisto enters by the opposite door and follows him stealthily He stops at the door to the workroom by which Faust went out and glances after him*]

Mephisto

So this is how you turn the tables? But you will lose the game!—This Faust is a very bundle of surprises!—However you juggle it, I swear by the Mother, you shall lose! You are already on a little islet, with wild waves raging all around you You shall lose everything! Can there be any doubt it—who will win our contest?

Cockatoo [squeaking loudly]

Faust! Faust! Faust!

Mephisto [threatening it with his finger]

Stupid bird!

SCENE V

[A room in the Bishop's palace The blue light of a ceiling lantern barely illuminates the corners of the room filled with armchairs and couches In one corner there is a statue with two lamps alight in front of it—so beautiful that it is hard to tell at sight whether it represents the Madonna or Hera In the middle of the room under the lantern is a round table covered with a gorgeous table cloth and on it silver dishes with the remains of a rich repast coloured glasses many shaped decanters and flacons of wine In armchairs some little distance from it and in a convivial mood drinking wine sit Bishop Wilfrid Judge Jan van der Hoog and Baron Mephisto]

The Bishop wears a violet silk cassock a golden cross set with turquoises on his chest a violet coloured cap on his curly grey hair His face and hands are white and aristocratic with a number of rings on his soft plump fingers his lips glitter with wine his cheeks are rosy his nose is thick and berigi his eyes kindly He is very fat yet elegant

The Judge is a thin man in a black satin robe He is bald in front but has thick flowing hair at the back A chain of office on his shoulders His hands are dark his fingers long his complexion greenish dull eyes with much white hair and raised brows as though he were always in a state of anxiety

me from a disordered stomach " For, my friends, what antiquity misdeemed the temptation of Satan, was merely a disorganised digestion, vapours rising from the smouldering entrails to the brain On the other hand Grace is nothing more than an extraordinary harmony of the functions of the digestive organs All the heretics, my friends, have suffered from catarrh That is why they are called *catarrhoi* The Fathers of the Church used to prescribe fasting, just as doctors advise dieting The stomach my good friends, is superior to the head For never could any wisdom, swallowed by the eyes perusing books, enable us to take into ourselves as our own the Lord himself, yet we partake thus of Christ's flesh and blood in the substance of bread and wine through the agency of the mouth and the stomach As with matter so with deity,—man's means of communication is the same, through the stomach, which is thus our point of contact with the universe Plato assigned the primacy to the head, Hippocrates to the heart, Aristippus to the sexual organs yet we all know of people witless, heartless, sexless—but stomachless, never!

Mephisto [applauding loudly]

Bravo, bravo! Let us stand up and sing the laudation of the Bishop!

Mephisto and the Judge [stand up and sing in bass]

Dominus episcopus
Vir sapientissimus
Stomacho fortissimus,
Vivat longum sæculum
Ad salutem pecorum!

[The Bishop thanks them pressing his plump hands to his heart]

Judge

They do not like me—although, I swear by the alma mater of my brilliant youth amongst the learned doctors of Bologna, I am acquainted with all the niceties of Roman law I can handle the Codex

Justinianus like an organist his organ I even now and then obtain from it some chord of my own that may be useful I remember their petition against me presented to the Duke I laughed it aside with my Latin He came to hear me give my decision I swear he did, by Papinian's beard ! On this occasion, on the Baron's advice, I put legal precedents aside and acquitted them all, pronouncing the decisions as the great Alguacil had taught me But I know, had I not so acted, the Duke, who is a poor jurist, would have expelled me from Trotzburg I shall get on much better with the young Duke Further, what is justice and the lawful procedure of a court ? Is there any external criterion ? The sages have entrusted their wisdom to the Judges hand just as they consign to those of a good cook their victuals and condiments Out of them he concocts a judicial sance, wherewith he seasons every case—naturally, with proper regard to circumstances, in accordance with his own taste or that of some prominent gastronome

Mephisto

Bravo ! Bravo ! Your reverence stand up, and we will sing the laudation of the Judge

Bishop and Mephisto [rise and sing]

Vivat judex optimus,
Vivat vir doctissimus,
Semper servus regibus
Sed dictator legibus

Mephisto

Law and the Church ! What great words ! The whole soul of the police consists of this alone to support Law and the Church as these support Society and the Throne As for the army—in so far as it is my special pride—it is proving itself to be a sort of police In international matters, might is still right Never will there be order everywhere triumphant, until all over the universe there reigns one Church, one Law, and one Police !

Mephisto

Now my turn !

I'll pipe you now the Judge's praise,
 And the Law's and his ineffable ways
 Guilty wights, now shall ye tremble,
 For solemn see the Court assemble,—
 See behind the judge two foxes
 Dragging antique scales in boxes,
 Brothers true are judge and merchant,
 So the scales will suit the serjeant
 Wolves support the sword of justice,
 Wherewith each hothead from his bust is,
 On good causes truly stated,
 Legally decapitated
 Comes an ape in chains behind them
 To let law itself remind them
 That the Law is Force's bratling
 To this precedential rattling
 Courts can forge men's guilt at pleasure
 Yet, good friends, to their own measure
 Judges dance—their chains are straiter—
 Truth their judge, Force their dictator
 Piles of paper, all a-huddle
 On an ass in misty muddle !
 All things needed spring to existence,
 For the judge must have subsistence !
 Force's cubs are those bare packets,
 Deftly bound in their strait jackets
 Note how most decorous each is
 Though they go withouten breeches
 Nowhere more distinguished fudge is
 Found than in our courts and judges

Judge

Bravo ! Bravo ! The praise of justice ! There is
 nothing higher ! I ask you, what is God himself ? A
 judge ! That's as true as I'm drunk !

Bishop

Most esteemed Baron, the Church celebrates you as the
 representative of lofty subtlety

The subtle Serpent once beguiled the woman Eve,
 And to God's wrath led our first parents. But, believe
 This in addition—that the fall of Man yet proved
 A boon, for on the road of sin men slowly moved
 And timidly made ready for the faith of Christ
 Ne'er could the Cross have risen, had not the Snake
 enticed

That is why Moses in the desert on a pole
 Set up a brazen Serpent to convert the soul
 "Harmless of heart be ye, as doves," thus Christ once
 spake

' Yet hide in your wise heads the sharp tail of the
 Snake '

So, by the Snake, the Friend our foe? Revered
 Mephisto,

Nay! To the pure, you know, all things are pure, per
 Cristo!

Mephisto [with a deep bow]

Could I but feel myself a worthy representative of the
 ancient Serpent, I would thank you on his behalf. The
 ancient Serpent was black as night, incommensurable
 and infinite. There arose a senseless fool whom the
 Babylonians called Morduch. Morduch shattered the
 ethereal chasms and created Light, and the eternal
 Darkness, that harmonious ring, that peaceful immo-
 bility, was splintered into fragments, out of which this
 pitiable world was constructed. But the æons shall
 flow by, the Heaven and the Earth shall pass away, as
 the Prophets have foretold yet the ancient Serpent
 liveth—not only in this enslaved and senseless existence,
 but also in the form of very many sinuous snakes and
 snakelets, dragons and worms, which nibble at Existence,
 so as to hasten its downfall. The world is a Hell
 scorched in the flaming of the Light,—which shall not
 be put out, as the Gospel says. But this sinful
 Existence is being gnawed through by the Great Worm,
 who also shall not die. It is said of the distant descend-
 ants of Adam, that they shall bruise the head of the
 Serpent. The text is corrupt. What was meant was,
 that you shall be the crest on the crown of the Serpent's
 head that the Serpent shall be the foundation of your

pillars The Serpent in the State is the great Alguacil, policeman and censor, extinguisher of the light, upholder of the old order which approaches ever nearer to its downfall, and on its crest there is uplifted the Allied Church. This is the great mystery

Do ye drink a cup of strong wine, a loving-cup, ye lips of order! Verily, verily, I say unto you, if we succeed in preventing its reformation this mean life will go on all the way back to nirvana, to the bliss of sleep, to the beatitude whereof the Saints once dreamed, and there will triumph the one true order, the order of the taciturnity of the graveyard of all motion Drink ye!

Judge

I swear by Garus, I haven't understood a word, but the Baron's such a good little fellow I would drink with him were it to Satan himself!

[*He drinks*]

Bishop

Baron, who can discern the depths of the universe? The most ancient of men asked "Knowest thou whence all is, and wherefor thou art, who sittest on the summit of the universe? Or knowest thou nought of this?" Where is the plenitude of knowledge? Why, then, plunge into the abyss? I float on the surface, and say

For your passing hour prevail,
Short-lived creature of a day!
One brief flare, and then thy frail
Spirit flits from thee away

Let the immortal soul torment itself with questions of eternity—not the frail body! Baron, this is my mortal body that is clad in a violet silk, it is warm, it rejoices, it breathes, it thinks, it desires—yes, it! The soul, I do not perceive. If, after the body's death, it is released, then let it take thought for what it shall behold with fleshless eyes. But so long as I am material, I believe

in the material Church, the great social institution
Do thou serve her as she serves me ! After a cup of two
I am quite frank with my friends

[*He drinks There is a knock at the door and a lay brother enters*]

Lay-Brother

Most Reverend Father, Count von Stern begs leave to
enter

Bishop

Certainly, certainly, admit him !

[*Count von Stern enters, in riding costume*]

Stern

Friends, I have come to offer you my alliance !

Bishop

You come from the Duke, most noble Count ?

Stern

On the contrary, he sought to dissuade me from taking
this step, but something greater induces me to come
to you—my hatred of any kind of disorder Friends,
our victory is beyond all doubt The heavens foretold
a great defeat of the rebels They foretell the enthronement
of Prince Faustus his father's reconciliation,
and the cloudless rule of the new monarch The life
of my future father-in-law will be as cloudless, and I
and my betrothed have granted to us a long and peaceful
life, and a sufficiently numerous posterity The
combination of the planets augurs the best fortune
for us

Mephisto

Excuse me, Count, but I should like to know more
exactly what Duke Faustus writes you

Stern

He writes, as I have just said, that he does not approve
of my participation in his son's expedition and would
rather see me beside him in his palace with my beautiful

bride But he also says that, having decided to observe the strictest neutrality in the quarrel of his children, he will not insist

Mephisto

And what did you reply ?

Stern

I expounded my motives to him

Bishop

Astrologically ?

Stern

Of course

Mephisto

Tell me, Count,—have the stars never lied to you ?

Stern

A sceptic's scoff ! Never ! Sometimes it may have happened I miscalculated a horoscope, but *post facto* I have always traced the error, and have convinced myself—did I need convincing—that, save for such slips, the future would be as clear as though it were past history Besides, I have an occult system, orally transmitted to my spiritual father of blessed memory, Dr Aegyptus, and derived from Hermes Trismegistos himself

Mephisto

I once heard that this Aegyptus was a beggarly charlatan and an utter ignoramus You see the depths to which slander can descend !

Stern

Oh, but any calumny of my sacred teacher is never forgiven ! My father's major-domo, Julius Barfuss, once dared to carry to my father a false report against the doctor—namely, that the doctor, on the pretence of conducting observations from the Tower, was there drinking good sherry wine in the company of his pious kinswoman, Rachel Levy—a majestic and beautiful

woman, very learned and sedate—and that he, Julius, had peeped through the keyhole and seen them take off their clothes and silently dance certain Bacchic rites !

Mephisto

O ho !

Stern

But, that same night, the night on which he laid his information, Barfuss had a frightful vision. A figure all in dazzling white crept into his bedroom, and pronounced these words—"For the dishonouring of Saints"—and then smote Barfuss with a rod on his stomach with unimaginable force, and so vanished, Barfuss shrieking. And on the place where the blow had descended there soon appeared a great bruise. Then, as the outrageous man would not repent, but on the contrary maintained that the visitor was no Being from Beyond, but Doctor Aegyptus himself in disguise, another misfortune overtook him, for, at my tearful intercession, my deceased father expelled Barfuss from the Palace !

Mephisto

Yes, the uprightness of the Doctor is evident !

Stern

He was a great man ! Once he

[A loud knock echoes at the door. The lay brother runs in, frightened.]

Lay Brother

Can't you hear, Your Reverence ? The whole courtyard is filled with armed men ! The Tribune is already ascending the staircase with an armed following ! I'm all a-tremble

[Confusion in the room.]

Bishop

ave they dared ? Oh, my stomach, my stomach !

Judge

What ? Do the rebels dare to assail the majesty of the law ? Where can we hide ? In every situation there is always some avenue of escape

Mephisto

Well, as far as I am concerned,—farewell !

[By a swift movement Mephisto spreads his dark cloak with the red lining outward, sits on it, whistles and flies away by the window, which opens with a bang Scott enters, followed by soldiers and apprentices with torches]

Scott

Bishop Wilfrid, Judge van der Hoog, you are hereby relieved of your duties in Trotzburg Do not reply, the resolution was passed by the Town Council on the recommendation of both the Tribunes You will forthwith leave the city

Bishop

But—our property ?

Scott

You arrived here without any property, you have not engaged in any productive work in the city, what you mistakenly considered your property belongs to the City of Trotzburg Get ready ! The horses are waiting Captain, conduct these gentlemen to the frontier !

[He turns round smartly and goes out The Captain and some soldiers remain]

Captain [roughly]

Sharp's the word !

CURTAIN

woman, very learned and sedate—and that he, Julius, had peeped through the keyhole and seen them take off their clothes and silently dance certain Bacchic rites !

Mephisto

O ho !

Stern

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[He bows round smartly and goes out. The Captain and some soldiers remain]

Captain [roughly]

Sharp's the word!

CAPTAIN

SCENE VI

[*The Park and orchard at the base of the Falcon Tower A night in August Throughout there is heard the splashing of an unseen fountain The trees, heavily laden with fruit, gleam in the beams of a bright moon The air is sweet with the odour of an espalier of cream tea roses On the left, the dark mass of the Falcon Tower, its marble veranda and broad staircase with a balustrade and flower pots To the right a low stone wall, also decorated with vases, beyond it a road, and on the other side of the road, bushes From time to time a nightingale warbles A continuous throbbing of grasshoppers The Tower clock slowly strikes eleven*

In the moonbeams on the road, there appears a Mystic Knight on horseback A soft bluish light glitters on his armour, shield, and helmet with lifted visor A long white cloak hangs from his shoulders and covers the horse almost down to the ground The horse is also white

A young and gentle Page, in a silver costume and a basel with an ostrich plume, leads the horse by the bridle The Page has a golden trumpet in his belt The Knight carries a harp

They stand still Rising on his stirrups, the Mystic Knight looks around Then he gently passes his hand over the harp strings, producing a sweet chord

A pause Then the Knight begins to sing, accompanying himself on the harp]

Oh, full of strong sap is our old mother Earth,
 In her bosom with milk overflowing
 The hidden roots lie, drinking deep from their birth,—
 Sweetly, silently drinking and growing
 Scarce rustles the leaf, when the fruit hangs low,
 And comes Death sweeping down from the North,
 For in cycle thus the full tides of Life flow,
 Roaring torrent the Fountain pours forth
 At the height of its power Life fashions the seed,
 Brooding slumber of Autumn is here,
 In the magic of sleep Life turns dream into deed,
 And makes ready new spring for each year
 "Death will always prevail, Death will always prevail,"
 The sad waters of Autumn lament
 "Life will always avail, Life will always avail,"
 Fields and orchards in whispers dissent
 Gentle rapture of moonlight, dim blue-shadowed dream,

FAUST AND THE CITY

Warm aroma of roses that fade,
 Lispering, chattering fountain, and sad sweeter stream
 Of a nightingale song in the glade

[The Page sounds his trumpet listens and then sings in a boy's
pure alto]

O eh! O eh!
 All ye who softly sleep rouse ye!
 Ye dead, to new life rise!
 And may for each his blessing be
 The self creating power to see
 Eternal Spring through lovers' eyes!
 O eh! O-eh!

[They stand listening a moment and then slowly pass on Faustina
 wrapped in an immense Venetian shawl emerges on the
 veranda shyly and swiftly looks out along the road and runs
 down the steps]

Faustina

Eleven o'clock! The letter the dove brought me said
 he would be here at eleven—How I dreaded I should
 be late! [Pause] Father was so long getting to sleep
 He was working all last night, and will probably soon
 wake up again drink his elixir and sit down to work
 again Old Wenzel has been long since asleep, and
 there is no one else in the Tower, for the page has
 galloped away with a message to Arthur, and the
 gardener is by now at home with his children Yet, I
 am afraid! Perhaps not so much of anyone seeing us
 as of this meeting itself I am all a shiver, though the
 night is warm I am so glad to see him—it is so long
 since I saw him—and yet I almost wish he would not
 come! For I know what he will talk about—Oh
 rather, father, how I love you my poor great father!—
 Who is coming? 'Tis he!

Gabriel

Faust is strong. Possibly, left quite alone, he will the sooner break his pride and come to the aid of the City. This is already the second month of the siege. Brave as are our men, there is a terrible balance of strength with the enemy. Oh, Faustina, here you live so peacefully, so idyllically, but there—nothing but sombre anxiety on every face. There is the repressed discontent of the rich citizens, disturbed by my orders for the social organisation of work and by my scheme of taxation. At the same time a dangerous band of young hot-heads is afoot, which all the vagabonds, drunkards and madmen join. They have found a leader in the person of that aged fire eating foreigner, who is known by the name of Rebble. Add to this thousands of little unforeseeable worries, every one of them full of danger, because the least slip may shatter the fragile and superficial harmony of our Republic. I exhort and threaten. I work without remission. I have found a splendid assistant in Beveren, the cobbler. The minstrel Gunther Hunt also helps me along. No, I cannot complain that there has been any lack of capable men forthcoming in the City. All the foremen are beyond praise. But I am tired! I have never a moment of rest or pleasure, Faustina. Some nights not even an hour for sleep, and never one drop of kindness. You know, my mother died three years ago, and my good wife before her, quite young and childless, and with those dear ones I had grown so used to sympathy and affection. Even in those days I worked hard, but when I got home it was like bathing in a warm ocean of peace and love. But now I live in a strange solitude. I adore you, Faustina. I never thought I should so worship any human creature. Your absence is as a live wound in my heart, making it drip its life-blood—and I need every drop of my blood and my strength. If you only knew how much enthusiasm, what glowing language, what soul-stirring happenings and lofty moments there are in Trotzburg now! Yet also there hangs over us all the sombre doubt. And about us lie the wounded, the dead. It is no place of

mirth I am bidding you come to ! You see how selfish I am ! But I swear to you by Trotzburg great and free whom I serve with even greater love did I not think that I and my powers were necessary to the very life of our dear City lamp and ensign to the poor and enslaved hope of the sages and lovers of truth —then I should not have a thought of myself But I tell you your presence will pour a radiance into my heart will give me tenfold strength and all around will leap for joy when they know we have with us Faust's own daughter as the wife of a modest Tribune Do we not love each other ? If so then together let us weather this storm When it passes by I shall put off my scarf of red and green for I shall insist on the annual relief of tribunes I shall occupy myself with the economic problems and the drafting of just laws for Trotzburg redeemed as a private councillor of the people For I do not want either to retain power in my own hands or to relinquish it to those of William Scott The great City must not have over her even the shadow of a master Then we shall lead a quiet life full of splendid work and gentle love Thereto my peace loving heart calls me But how much of peril and conflict before we reach this goal ! And at such a time as this you are still far from me ! Does not your heart cry out to you Go ! Go ! To Trotzburg—to your Gabriel !

Faustina

Gabriel I love you with all my heart You are noble and wise you are consecrated and your holy thoughts are my religion I am ready to devote every moment of my life to you and your cause But Faust [She weeps]

Gabriel

Decide Faustina ! It will soon be midnight At any moment your father may awaken from his light evening sleep He will call you

Faustina

And I shall not be there to answer him ! There will be no answer and he will be here alone alone [She weeps]

Gabriel

And I? There, in the horrors of the siege, perhaps
stabbed by the knife of one of the enemy's paid assassins

Faustina [embracing him feverishly]

Oh, how I pity you . both ! *[She sobs]*

Faust [from within]

Faustina !

[The sound of a handbell]

Faustina

He has woken up !

Gabriel

You can waver no longer ! Listen ! I shall not come
back again ! Speak ! Condemn my heart to sorrow
but choose !

Faustina [wrapping her shawl about her]

Let us go, let us go ! May this act of mine be forgiven !
My head is whirling ! Help me ! *[Gabriel leaps the
wall and helps Faustina on to it and into the saddle]* If
I were a believer, I should pray Oh Earth our Mother,
almighty Nature, judge me ! Father, father, forgive
me, forgive !

*[Gabriel mounts and turns the horses heads They ride off and
the thud of hoofbeats dies away The fountain purls The
nightingale sings The wind rocks the lustrous golden fruits
on the apple and pear trees Suddenly as from a distance
there is heard the note of the golden horn and then the Page's
voice]*

Page

O eh ! O eh !

Let answer this whom life hath taught
The anguish Love can give
How shall Love's malice be unwrought
By grief ? Oh, drive it hence—'tis nought
But cowardice—and live !

[*The Passer by laughs grimly and walks on Silence The water trickles sadly The moon shines brighter Faust's voice is heard vaguely from inside the castle He comes out again, now somewhat bowed and his beard in disorder He sits on the bench where Faustina and Gabriel sat*]

Faust

Run away? Faustina—from me? Impossible! With my enemy? Unheard of! [*He stares in front of him in angry silence*] Forsaken me? And for whom? For that visionary? Incomprehensible! And never a word Run away—run away like Jessica from Shylock On such a night, on such a night! Run away, like Desdemona And I am alone, like Lear How distant, how foreign, all such fancies used to seem to me—and now I am living in the reality of their sorrow Hold awhile, Faust, you still do not believe it! Faust, you still do not dare believe it! Your dear Faustina run away from you? She hid in her soul, as in a dark night, her love and her intentions,—deceiving you? [*He covers his face with his hands, speaking hoarsely*] Foolishly deceived her loving father Ah, now you begin to believe it, old fool! What, now tears? Do you think you can still weep? Here is when your youth leaves you and the chill comes over you Trotzburg Faustulus Faustina [*In a weak voice, almost a childish whimper*] Children!

[*He raises his head proudly*]

Faust, you are alone—the depths of the heavens above you, under your feet the globe of earth, death before you, and behind you the terrible road, the graves of the dead.

So, now you are alone [*He rises and crosses his hands on his breast*] Somewhere they all live and struggle on, but without you You have been found superfluous This is death this is death, old man! Do you hear the funeral knell? And around you, all things live on

Lo, the fruit falls bearing the seed in its sweet body full of sap, but what has grown old, shall die Yes, this is death, Faust, when none has need of you, loved

to that of any star, being of a baser mental order no matter how luxuriant the wealth of its possibilities. Here passes away not simply a man, but Faust, in whose brain the golden threads of life are tied in a knot of miraculous beauty. Yet there is not a shudder, not a sound, everything is indifferent. They say that Cæsar's death was heralded by apparitions. Am I then less than Cæsar? But perhaps the Chroniclers lie. If only some huge face in the heavens were to look down on me with a vast farewell smile, or if the thunder were to peal out to me. Farewell! If only something supernatural were to stir, made for me, and me alone, for my last minute! How quietly and gladly then would I die. No! There is no personal god in the world. The world as a whole is impersonal. Faust is a nonentity! Oh, oh, such a nonentity!

It is only at this moment that I perceive what a petty, solitary thing I am, without link or tie—I, the great Faust, Duke of Wellentrotz and Troitzburg, the most learned of earthly men. Where art thou? I have lost thee. I cannot see thee. I am a crumb devoured by Infinity. Faust, where art thou? Earth, where art thou? And where upon thee is Faust? Death is terrible! And is this Life? The suns—the suns are consumed. Eternity! Oh, my soul, Eternity behind me, and before me the infinitude of endless Eternity. What! Music? My soul, art thou melting? What music! What is this? On high so powerful. I am uplifted! Beneath, too, in the depths. Oh, ye voices! What is this? Who sing now in chorus? The stars? The whole world is singing, it sings, it circles, it soars. I'll not meddle, not move, in this! Sweet, terrible,—it all breaks forth again!

With an invincible wave, into my poor narrow breast flow in diaphanous streams chorals extinguishing sound,—flowing and merging by heart, till it is lost in its bliss.

Regular measureless beat, making the firmament quake, calming the tempest of time, free exultation of space.

[The music becomes generally audible.]

Ceaseless generation, child of nothingness, powers of transformation, wave-tide limitless! Tale without beginning, things without hands made, circles ceaseless spinning, mysteries displayed! Reason in unreason, aim of aimless might, shining wings uprisen, noisy, infinite! Great or small all equal, agelessly begun, one in endless sequel, link on link firm spun! Each in his true placing every moment sings, mystic circles tracing, dancing mystic rings—Let who, self-reliant, were for battle born, bold, of fate defiant hold their faith true sworn! Mighty purpose surges, joyous it has soared, every moment merges in one timeless chord!

Thus, then, dost thou sing, O Nature? Is this what thy voice teaches? Blood grows young, from heart to brain pulsing and singing. The song is the self-same eternal song of Nature, arousing slumbrous thoughts, encouraging the oppressed spirit. In the elemental whirlings amid the gulfs of world creation, here on earth on this spot, I rediscover myself! I—that I am! In front of my eyes my forgotten ambitions glow afresh, my mind is intoxicated with strong wine and sparkles

To live and create! [*Then as though he were awakening*] What has happened? A dream? What had come over my soul? Solitude? But am I not here with the universe, with mankind—with my own work to do? They did not understand? They shall understand! And Faustina? But—is there not some fateful error here? Whither were you rushing like a boy? Does not your Iron Man await you down there in your workshop, already with the shadow of a soul in him? What? I was going to go away without finishing what I had begun?—to go away of my own free will without perfecting my project? Shameful shameful, you grey headed infant! Live! As long as your breast heaves, your heart beats, and your brain works, live! And see—your breast heaves mightily, your heart beats fast your mind works clearly. Death will come in its own good time. Make haste then as long as this splendid mind is alive—make haste, so you may leave behind you a furrow, broad and deep,—so

you may rise in the eyes of your brothers and your
descendants one step higher on the ladder of human
greatness

[It is afar the voice of the Mystic Knight is heard]

The Knight

Death breathes his cold mist on the autumn tree,
And the leaves lie dead in the frost,
But illusions are death and decay for thee
Shou shalt not pass away or be lost
Now, thy fruit being ripe, let the seed come to birth,
Lay thee down in the winter to rest
On thy mother's miraculous womb of the earth,
To awaken in spring on her breast
And let feelings re felt, thoughts re-thought, glow and
mount,
Ever layer on layer new growing,
With thy measures remeasure, thy count re account,
What past ages on youth are bestowing

[The sound of the golden horn and the Page goes by, singing]

The Page

O eh! O-eh!
Tell him whose thoughts beneath the moon
Hang heavy, full of strife,
Life stirs in silences star-strewn,
Through form or feeling, sleep or swoon—
Love's legislator, Life
O eh! O-eh!

*[Faust listens attentively then suddenly leaning out over the
plain he answers in a strong voice]*

Faust

O-eh! O-eh!

CURTAIN

SCENE VIII

[*The sand dunes in South East ru Well nhol. Dreary hillocks sparsely covered with heather. One large black rock rises peculiarly among the dunes to the spectators left almost pyramidal in shape and known as Devilsblock. In the background a gloomy sea. It is night time. The clouds are chasing across the sky throwing fantastic shadows on the sand. The moon is declining. The little valleys draped in mist are lit up from time to time by pale summer lightning. Mephisto enters in a long black cloak one thin end of which drags after him, his head covered with a long hanging hood. He has an evil and pensive mien.*]

Mephisto

Ah, Here! [*He stops*] This accursed Trotzburg! This accursed Faust! Never did I think that out of my labours would rise such a terrible obstacle to the triumph of order! [*He sits at the base of Devilsblock, bites his hand, and utters a strange cry, something between a growl and a sob*] Mother, mother, I am nigh to desperation! Oh, I know that victory in the end must be ours! Yet what avail my efforts? Faster and faster anguish devours me. I yearn for peace! These human lice of the globe have become hateful to me. Between them all we grow powerless. My magic itself is losing its power. The Things will not obey. We swim against a flowing tide. We pray and melt away like shadows before the Magician Dawn—Whate'er betide, Faustulus must win to-morrow. Let us begin!

[*He approaches the Devilsblock slowly and solemnly making strange passes as though summoning someone from all sides at once. He mounts the pyramid and on the summit of it puts his fingers into his mouth and utters a piercing whistle.*]

Heigh-oho! Ye deep graves, open wide! Ye flagstones of churches and vaults, yawn ye open! I cleave earth with the spear head of my whistle with the scythe of evil charms with the ploughshare of annihilation. Heigh oho! Strong bones, rotten bones dust itself bestir yourselves,—arise! Ye scattered atoms, seek each other anew! Time past reconstruct thyself for the sake of destruction! Hoi oho! Hoi oho! Old rusty armour, swords and spears do ye clang together,

roll hither and pick up! Hoi-oho! Heigh-oho! Heigh, heigh! Stand ye beneath the moon, ye ancient peoples, ancient families, tribes and clans! The descendants of slaves have raised an insurrection! They mock your degenerate descendants! Come to the succour of Order, ye dead! Out of the darkness of abbeys, from under the willows and cypresses, from the battle-fields, out of sand and nettles, up from the billows of the ocean, out of your stately tombs, arise and hasten! Draw up your legions! Out of clouds will I weave you banners, the crows shall sing you a martial song! March on, march on, ye rusty warriors! Hoi-oho! Hoi-oho!

[Groans are heard a rattling and clattering, and then with a heavy stamping from out of the rock there emerge chained horses mounted by men in chains. Misty banners flutter. A flock of crows flies croaking over the army of the dead. The visors are lowered but here and there skulls can be seen with staring eye sockets, the gaps of the nasal bones, and horrible grinning jaws.]

Mephisto

More! Still more! [He waves his hands in all directions] Ye paladins of the past, ye terrible ancestors, ye powers of things consolidated! Hither, hither, to the succour of your degenerate descendants! Let not serfs have mastery of the earth! [He whistles again.] Ah, a gallant army, a gallant army, indeed! To-morrow, in the heat of the fray, a cold shudder shall grip the hearts of the combatants. Paltry Life's warriors shall tremble, but the champions of Order shall feel the mighty support of the dead hand. And ye, ye mighty bones ye knights of the worm, of blight and mouldiness, ye shall display yourselves amid the consternation of a dreadful panic—and ye shall conquer! For with you is my Mother, who is casting you off anew, after swallowing you in the maw of death—Mother Night! Ye splendid, gallant cavaliers, now let loose your battle cry!

[A strange heavy groan echoes over the duties. Someone cries out rending. Then a louder and longer cawing of crows.]

Mephisto [folding his hands on his breast]

Ye hapless churls, without ancestry or lineage, ye rootless grass, try your reckoning with these glorious ones! Bravo, bravo, my skeleton soldiers! Ye shall conquer!

[I heard his words when a clank of teeth a creaking of bones
and a dull clank of iron]

Do ye remain motionless on this plain, ye resurrected! When I shall whistle to you ye are to march ahead to the battlefield. Mother now our cause is assured! I thank thee for returning thy dead, they shall bring back to thee many others, thou shalt have heavy interest, thou great usurer!

[Suddenly a harmony is not so harsh as though a giant hand had plucked an immeasurable harp string. The clouds scatter the alley is brilliantly illumined with the moon. A large green star glows in the middle of the horizon over the sea. A translucent green figure of a half spectral woman appears in the air near the coast. Her melodious voice sounds from afar]

Speranza

Presume not, thou poor demon to meddle with thy black magic in the battles of living Life!

Mephisto

Empty apparition that my breath might dissipate, wilt thou prohibit me?

Speranza

Thou weighest down one of the scales with the dust of the past? Then I on the other will set the vision of the future—my power! Thou hast summoned from their graves the ancestral oppressors. I will summon the bright descendants of those who seek freedom.

[Speranza raises her hands. The green star blazes up and throws a dazzling kaleidoscopic road of light across the waves on which from unseen depths there issue forth phantoms white and green thronging the shore in crowds waving branches of palm-leaves of oak myrtle and laurel. White and azure doves wings are seen red banners and lofty lamps that burn with a blue light]

Chorus of Spectral Voices [*in melodious harmony*]

With you, in you, for ever are we,—
 Athirst for life the life we shall win,
 And with our myriad eyes we see
 Life's golden thread and you who spin
 We hear the martyr's groan we hear
 Earth's prayers in passionate whispers rise,
 The ringing words of poet and seer,
 The hum of work, and the battle cries
 Athwart all time, still—still with you,
 Our hands to our fathers' hearts outspread,
 Your life-time here we encircle anew,
 And bridge posterity with the dead
 Ye called us hither, and we arrive—
 We are here our life through you to win
 In your own life we are now alive,
 Life's golden thread we will help you spin
 And none shall rend it—no, not Fate,
 Nor Evil's sword, nor Death's cold spell!
 The strife ye lived we gladly await
 In battle of Life we have conquered Hell!

[*All at once everything vanishes Mephisto is left on the rock alone*]

Mephisto [*sitting down*]

How weary I am! The feet of my earthly body are
 trembling The spirit desires to shake off these worn-out
 rags!—So, then, I am all but powerless Yet shall
 the wheel of time at some season stop, let it meanwhile
 whirl all the faster, one day it will begin to run down
 Oh cold still moon, let me console myself with the bare
 landscape of thy dead lands,—let me sate with them
 these semi-human eyes! Oh, to rest, to rest there in a
 quiet nook where Death has already set up his throne
 of ice Accursed Earth I trample on your face! Hasten
 to die! So that thy offscourings may not be nourished,
 thou shalt die! I spit on thee thou scabby ball of
 mud! Oh moon,—to thee my kisses!

[*He stretches himself black and lean and a countenance of deathly
 pallor He stretches himself more and more until he suddenly
 and silently rises and flies into the dead expanse of the moon*]

CURTAIN

SCENE IX.

[Near a lighthouse the horn on concealed by the lofty crest of Faust's dyke. To the left the tall graceful tower of the lighthouse the lantern of which is alight alternately emitting green and red rays at regular intervals. One horn of the moon is rising over the dyke. The stars are glittering.]

Groans are audible on the plain in front of the dyke. Gradually it grows lighter and corpses of horses and men become visible scattered over the sands. Someone stirs.

Mephisto wrapped in a black cloak is leading by the reins a black horse on which Faustulus is seated bent double miserably in armour but no helmet.]

Faustulus

Where are we going?

Mephisto

To the Nether Regions!

Faustulus

I am afraid!

Mephisto

Sh! Silence! Yes there is someone stirring here That all wise astrologer! Is that you, Count Arthur von Stern?

Arthur

It is I Give me some water!

Mephisto

On no account! You will be dying immediately. If you quench your thirst you will be all the more ridiculously inflated by to-morrow's or the next day's dawn.

Arthur

I shall die?

Mephisto

Of course! You are hacked to bits.

Arthur

But the stars

Mephisto

Ha-ha ha !

Faustulus

Your stars, brother, your stars ! A curse on all your star-gazing ! I am cold and terrified I do not want to die

Arthur

Nor I Was it all an illusion ? Who is the evil one that has thus bemoaned me ? To be born, to be deceived, to come near the cup of love, and die in a pool of one's own blood beating off the kites with one's own weakening hands Oh, I am suffering in body and soul !

Mephisto

Look at the stars, let your eyes feast on them ! Soon your eyes will be glazed over You will be a red and white corpse beneath the glitter Then you will decay, and there will be a little grass growing on the sands, whimpering and whispering to the breeze, but the stars will be laughing Ha ha ! Victory ! Descendants ! A long peaceful life ! Ha ha ! Now you, you landless Prince, let us be on our way !

Faustulus

Whither ?

Mephisto

To the Nether Regions !

[*They pass on*]

Arthur

The stars have led To die without having under
stood anything The stars Where am I
flying ? Enough of pain enough of thirst
perplexity Sleep

CURTAIN

SCENE X

[In a little house on the outskirts of Troitzburg where Faust resides incognito His room and workshop are separated by a tapestry curtain Twilight A Venetian window filled with flowering plants in pots aglow with the bluish light of early evening Simple furniture a massive table books a globe retorts and parts of mechanical devices scattered about Faust is sitting at the window dressed in a long robe He is reading a big book with an old man's spectacles perched on his nose A pause He raises his head]

Faust

Spring is coming The days are getting longer Shall I open the window? Let us see! [He opens the window] Ah there is my little nine year-old Holda barefooted, in her pretty torn frock and her loose mane of golden hair

Holda

You have opened the window Grandad?

Faust

Yes, Holda

Holda

Mind you don't catch cold!

Faust

It is spring and you are going barefoot

Holda

I am quite young and you are old What are you staring at? My torn clothes? You mustn't think we're poor! Father always says there are no poor in Troitzburg now Poverty left the city with Faust he says And I have some quite pretty dresses but you see I always tear them grandad Mother says I spoil everything And my shoes too But I don't like

Faust

Quite impossible

Holda

You see ! And I love to climb that old pear tree and
 peep down into your window from up there and watch
 you do magics

Faust

Magics ?

Holda

Well, yes make machines Do you know what father
 says of you ? He says He's a crazy old gaffer, he
 wants to make the pere perepe

Faust

Perpetuum mobile

Holda

Yes, that s it !

Faust

No, your father is wrong I have already found the
 perpetuum mobile it is the World I am only making
 light carts to make it easier for the poor little donkeys
 to pull heavy loads

Holda

Then you're not a magician ?

Faust

No, Holda

Holda

Listen ! Do you know, Father says he says
 Mijnheer Dampier is so like a certain person that if I
 were not sure that person were far away and would
 never come to live in Trotzburg, I should think—father
 says—I should think that it was he I don't know who
 he means —You aren t tired of me ?

Faust

Not at all

Holda

Are you always working, writing, reading ?

Faust

Yes, Holda

Holda

And have you no own grandma ?

Faust

No

Holda

Or children or grandchildren ?

Faust

They are far away

Holda

If I were your granddaughter I wouldn't have gone away from you, you are such a nice old man. You are so nice to look at. And I tell all your stories to my play-mates, and they all, all love them. Tell me a story, grandad !

Faust

Then jump in by the window, Holda. I am always glad when you come in because you are my little golden mouse.

[*Holda lightly jumps in by the window between the flower pots*]

Holda

Here's your little golden mouse ! [*She looks round*]
But you are all in the dark.

Faust

Quite impossible

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 peep down into your window from up there and watch
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[*Holda lightly jumps in by the window between the flower pots*]

Holda

Here's your little golden mouse ! [*She looks round*]
But you are all in the dark.

Faust

We'll light the lamp

[*He lights a big lamp*]

Holda

What a pretty lamp you have ! Like a white ball.
Now I'll sit in your armchair That will be nice ! The
truth is, grandad, my feet are cold

Faust

We will wrap them up in this shawl

Holda

How lovely and soft ! Now, that's perfect !

Faust

Not quite ! Tell me, Holda, do you like mead ? I have
some here

[He fetches a mug from the cupboard and some mead and cake]

Faust

Biscuits, too, you like

Holda

I'll dip them in the mead ! And, now, a story

Faust [walking up and down the room]

Once upon a time, Holda there lived in the world a wise
and rich man. He had a beautiful daughter and a
knightly son. He loved them very dearly and hoped
for all happiness for them. To this end he chose his
daughter a husband and secured the son an important
position at the King's court. He took the handsome
bridegroom by the hand, brought him to his daughter,
and said "Daughter, this is your husband. Look
what a handsome, black browed, curly haired youth
he is. He is of noble blood and even richer than we
are." But the daughter said nothing, only dropped
her eyes, and the bridegroom kissed the tips of her
fingers. Then the father went to his son, dressed him
in a dress braided with gold, put a precious wand in his
hands and set on his head a crown of jewels, and said
"Go now to the King's court, you shall be his favourite
cup bearer. Honour and joy await you in the royal
service." But, little Holda the son said nothing. And
night was approaching. The wise man sat on the steps

leading up to the house, under the trees in his garden And it grew dark Suddenly he saw his daughter come out of the house in her white dress, and go and hide in the garden The wise man saw her glance timidly around, but she did not notice her father was there And all was still again, only the clear roulade of the tree frog and the gleams of the fire flies floating in rings above the bushes The wise man followed his daughter, passed through the garden, and came to the courtyard He picked his way among the carts and ploughs, and entered the stable of the working mules and asses, following the white figure of the maiden The stable reeked of warm manure In the far stall there was a mule with a big head and very long ears Through a hole in the roof the light of the eternal stars fell on the beast, chewing hay and slowly swinging its tail The maiden went up to it She embraced its neck She began kissing its shaggy head, and with its rough tongue it kissed her hand And she said "Thou art my bridegroom, and I will have no other The wise man, staggered and frightened, turned back, and could not collect his thoughts And his old heart was troubled And then there glided past him into the night, his son, wrapped in a cloak and his hat over his eyes He stealthily walked out by the wicket gate from the garden into the wood Feeling something ominous, the father followed the son It was a black darkness in the wood, full of rustlings The owl was hooting And the son walked on to a deep dank cave, and crawled on all fours into the narrow aperture And all men knew that in that cave there dwelt a snake, and they feared even to look on it, even in broad daylight The wise man was horrified He turned back The clock-tower was striking twelve 'Is my daughter still there with the mule?' he thought and went to see He rubbed his eyes, thinking he was seeing amiss though the moon had risen and it had become light enough All around was one mysterious blue light At the door of the stable stood a handsome young man in a grey shirt and a grey hat with two crane's feathers in it He was embracing the wise man's daughter, and saying You know I am industrious, strong and patient The

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evil charm will fall from me when you become my wife, and I shall always have human speech, and, with the aid of your love, I will build up a house of happiness for ourselves and for others, for the workers who have no work, no households, no firesides, for the learned who have no books, for all whose heads or hearts or hands are crippled because Fate has been against them." Then the wise man was confounded. Knowing not what to think, he went into the wood, very anxious about his son. In the bright moonlight he saw his son sitting on a stump beside the entrance of the cave. At his feet lay the serpent, slain, and the boy was scattering bright jewels, rubies, emeralds in whole handfuls, taking them out of golden vases and caskets. Then the wise man exclaimed, "My son, what is this?" And he replied, "This is the fortune I have found and won for myself, because I did not wish to hold cups for the king." And the wise man said, "Your sister, too, has found her own fortune." And this was what had happened. They had themselves found and made their own fortune, as the wise man could never possibly have done for them. And the wise man was ashamed. But then he rejoiced, and said to himself, "I will strive in some way to increase their happiness, to bring the earth nearer to the sun, to send a flying ship to fetch the silver of the moon and in other ways."

And all these things they will do, because they live in friendship—Look, Holda, your mother is coming for you.

[A woman is seen at the window.]

The Woman

Is my little daughter with you, Mynheer Dampfer?

Holda

Here, here I am, mama! I have had some mead and am listening to a story.

The Woman

You had better hurry home. After mead you won't want your supper, and after hearing a story you won't go to sleep. You spoil her, Mynheer Dampfer.

Faust [stroking Holda's hair]

All the more joy to children, Fru Kemm !

Holda [kissing him hard]

Now go on making your new cart ! And thank you
for the mead and the story !

[She pumps out by the window]

The Woman

Good night, Mynheer Dampfer

Faust

Goodnight, Fru Kemm Sleep sweetly and soundly, my
little golden mouse But, stop ! Did you take that
letter this morning to the Tribune's house ?

Holda

Of course ! They said the Tribune had left overnight
to go and survey the work at Zuidkerken They are
draining the swamps there, like they were doing in
Faust's time

Faust

And his wife ?

Holda

She is always with her baby, she wouldn't get the
letter all at once But I saw Pieter Baas lay it on the
table where the Tribune works

Faust

Good, my little pet, very good ! Farewell !

Holda

Good bye, you kind little grandad, you kind

[She runs away from the window]

Faust [alone]

I surrender My pride is silent The children
were right ! It is only one winter since the days of the
siege, and Troitzburg is already flourishing O ye
youths, ye glorious children ! How they have got the

better of me ! And it is now three months since Faustina's baby was born, whom they call Henry Faustus—and I have not yet seen him ! Yet, it is true, to go to Canossa without having my Iron Man ready for them, would have grated on me. But now I do not go with empty hands. I have not spent my time in vain. Yes I must make my peace. Faustulus is living as a toady at any and every court, weaving wicked plots. It would be pitiful to subject my—our Troitzburg to another siege. Well, it is already dark. They will have read my letter—and they will come. I tremble at the thought of it.

[There is a knock at the door.]

Faust

My daughter !

[He rushes to the door and flings it open.]

[Mephisto wrapped in a red cloak stands on the threshold.]

Faust

You ? You have no place here !

Mephisto [taking a step forward]

We must speak together

[He waves the skirt of his cloak and the lamp almost goes out leaving only a pale glimmer of light in the darkness. On a black background there is visible only the beautiful grey head of Faust, and the ghastly pale masque of Mephisto.]

Faust

You are merely wasting my time, and to no purpose, evil spirit. Never did you have any power over me, and now less than ever.

Mephisto

So you are forgiving them ? *[Faust is silent.]* You are begging to be forgiven ? *[Faust is silent.]* The end, then ! In this empty heart there is no life, no fire, no blood. Your fame has been trampled down, your daughter taken from you, your son's estate stolen, and your enemies are insolently raising their heads in

victorious derision of you, making ready for a foetid triumph in their shopmen's paradise—until mutual envy and hatred shall bring that ant heap to its downfall—and you, you decrepit boy, you lickspittle, you crawl to beseech them graciously to pat you on the back! And I—why should I feel such horror and shame about you? Because in the chronicle of the ages the traces of our intimacy will be too long discernible, the loathly shadow of your fall, in its banality a surprise even to me, is a reflection upon my spiritual pride, and too long, I repeat, will it stain with the tears of your dotage the virgin blackness of my wings. You pitiable, pitiable being! And I had accounted you the first of men! Are you indeed he, then what is man worth, when even the first of them—look at him!—a soured brain in a split skull of bone, an aged diseased animal that desires peace and rest, a place on the hearth of those who mock him and gibe at him and cast him forth. I, always the enemy of generation,—almost shrivel with contempt at seeing the results! Oh filth, filth! That such a being should dare to exist!

Faust

Pray save your rhetoric for melancholy-mad undergraduates

Mephisto

You will soon die, Faust!

Faust

That is old news. I do not desire death, but I do not fear it

Mephisto

You might yet live!

Faust

At what price?

Mephisto

Arise anew! Re-awaken your pride, Faust! Say to me. Let us strike and flatten them out!—Solace yourself with revenge! Stand up before them as a Titan!

Tell them At my word Troitzburg was, and at my word it shall cease to be!—Give me your hand, and I will bestow on you long life,—I swear it, by the Mother!

Faust

You want me to slay my children so that I may prolong my own days on earth? No! They are of more importance than I am

Mephisto

You pitiable thing, what now? Modest and humble and contrite? You—you are Faust?

Faust

I am Faust who knows his own worth

Mephisto

You were never worth much in my eyes, but by your own slavish servility you appraise yourself even lower

Faust

I am Faust who knows his own worth For instance I know that you are my shadow—vacuity—that any single beat of my pulse is worth more than your spectral existence—that every quiver of my pupil is more replete of thought than all your phantom wisdom

Mephisto

Oh is that so?

Faust

You are a poor stupid devil And this not I alone know, but every yokel as well The priest represents you as crafty, mighty, and terrible, but the peasant depicts you as the poor fool that you are In folk-lore every Tom, Dick and Harry can dupe you and cudgel you, together with your everlasting companions, Death and the Policeman I used to know a soft-hearted old woman who in her old age suffered from hallucinations, and she once told me "To day a poor little devil visited me I was so sorry for him! I gave him some milk And quite by accident I pinched off his poor little paw He whined and was all a-tremble, poor little fellow, and daren't come for it, but hid away amongst the logs, and squeaked 'Mother, you have my paw, oh please, mother, give it back to me!—I am sorry for the poor little things,' she said, 'even a little sun-beam is too much for them, and they're no good to themselves or anyone else'" (*He laughs quietly*]

Well then, Mephisto, shall I give you back your paw, which Trotzburg pinched off with its heel of bronze? We—we live and develop But you—you are the monstrous grey of our shadow, the dusky background of our shining thoughts You are the King of the Rubbish heap, King of the Dust hole They call you Beelzebub, King of the Flies, but this is doing you too much honour, you are King Carrion, herald of the momentary weakening of Life in its eternal pulsation When the fly comes out of its egg, it flies on its little webbed wings higher than you The only reason you do not with envy follow its graceful and triumphant flight, is that you are too blind to understand the majesty and mystery of it, and to pierce into your own emptiness, your silliness, your hopeless inanity Shall I give you back your paw?

Mephisto

You?—you live and develop? Know then, presumptuous man, that there exists one Night, and that you—ha!—you and all your worlds are a mere incident, a stupid accident a single instant's error which will be

forgotten—a momentary flicker of Night, which will swallow you all up in her bosom and then sleep. But even before this dream shall uncreate itself in infinitude—this dream you call the Universe—your wretched paling yellowish sun-star will be palsied, will flush red and blue and black, and be extinguished. And your little system will whirl round benumbed in the æther—yet with more sense in it than when you set your heads a-whirling—ha!—with hope! You not only have existence, you beggars—that is, motion—from our point of view a most ridiculous and nonsensical half-existence—but to complete this ghastly obscene error, you feel and—alas!—you even think. How stupid it all is, how impassably stupid! You tiny implements, you puppets of necessity, you are endowed with a power of misconception known as understanding—and this, too simply in order that you may suffer, since suffering is essential to balance. Once such a perversion as motion had been produced, someone or other had to pay for this absurd this wretched interruption of peace, and so adjust the balance—that is why you suffer. Your pain is the beginning of the backward movement of the pendulum which I shall stop. The world shall pass away—even before the sun is extinguished, even before you are dust—and the scrap of dream you call your consciousness shall be scattered without leaving a trace.

Faust

Mephisto do you remember how you came to be born?

Mephisto

I am part of the All Mother. I pre-exist Eternity. But I issued forth out of the holy gulfs of darkness when the dull confusion began. I was born what I am through yearning for equilibrium when it had been destroyed, and I shall return to sweet and grand repose when it is restored.

Faust

Poor stupid little devil! Your Mother of whom you talk with such touching veneration, just like a yellow

beaked fledgeling brought up by a country parson, simply does not exist. Nothing exists as you conceive it. Everything is full everything is alive. And always has lived. Poor stupid devil see how thin and blue you have become. You are melting away even in the shadows of my room. Shall I give you back your paw? You imagined that that dark corner where you were born was pre-eternal. It was nothing but the dust hole of the world into which all the refuse and offscourings and offals are flung. There you were bred a parasite a woodlouse of the universe and you crawled out and brought with you from your dunghole the ideal of chaos into a world of eternally changing harmonies. The world rubbish heap of matter temporarily useless, though at some time still to be brought into service—there you have your Mother. In the glands of the brain where accumulate the poisonous secretions of an organism the refuse of nervous energy there you drag out a musty half-existence and thence the sun born blood with its freight of noble oxygen drives you forth. You reptile of the chasm you spider you child of corruption you only live because there is always rubbish in the world. One thing is being remoulded for life another is dying for repose. But the realm of light becomes ever higher. Thought grows—thought the greatest though the youngest of the elements while you become always more utterly contemptible until there shall be none to fear Hell. You are an aberration! Shall I give you back your paw?

Mephisto

Who are you to speak so confidently? How dare you oppose my knowledge with your speculations?

Faust

I am so rich and proud that I have no need to deck myself out in borrowed plumes. It may be that what I say is conjecture. But your ideas are a nightmare of debris mine are a flash of effort. You know? That is enough! Nobody knows. But all live. We are the builders you—the dust.

Mephisto

Ha ha ha ! So that's your story ! I always did say you were a bundle of surprises ! Well, wise Faust, know this, then to morrow you will die I hope you do not believe in the immortality of the soul ? To morrow you will die [*He leans over to Faust, and whispers hoarsely*] You will die, completely and for ever !

Faust

Wave succeedeth wave, and then cometh a new wave [*There is a knock at the door*] Faustina ! She has brought her child—my grandson—Henry Faustus citizen of Trotzburg last hope of my days—Vanish, phantom ! Life is a stir !

[*The lamp flickers Mephisto disappears The door opens Faustina stands on the threshold with a radiant smile She wears a green cloak with white fur and holds her baby close to herself in his warm wraps*]

Faustina

Dear Father ! You ! Oh I ran and ran ! Let me kiss your hands, your grey hair ! [*She weeps*]

Faust [also in tears]

Little daughter ! My grandson ! My darlings, darlings ! [*Long embraces*] What, really Faustina ? Faustina here alive ? And you are really happy ? You love Gabriel ?

Faustina

I am happy Father I adore my husband and my little son my lovely little angel You must see him at once But is it warm enough here ? Such a sweet little body he has And already he is smiling And he looks like you ! Really, he knows it is his duty to look like you !

Faust [busying himself at the stove]

I will make up the fire at once Don't unwrap him till I have made up the fire [*The fire begins roaring in the chimney*] But how was it Faustina, you hid it all away from me ? Oh no, my dear I intend no

reproach No, no, I don't ! But why, why ? It
was such a grief to me !

He again attends to the fire, and then approaches her

Faustina

Father, I was afraid You had already chosen me a
husband, and you didn't like Gabriel You were so
strong, although so kind

Faust

Oh you old tyrant ! You made even your own daughter
fear you ! What of others, then ? And yet they
endured your tutelage so long ! Now, let me see our
Henry Heavens, what a big boy ! A monster !
A giant !

Faustina

He is three months and four days, and already looks
like a half-year-old

Faust [taking him in his arms]

No, I won't let him fall, Faustina ! Henry, Henry !
Look, he has thrust his little rosy hand into my beard
Henry, my little bud ! My new self ! You look
so wise, and you smile like bliss and love and spring and
dawn and hope

[Gabriel enters quietly]

Gabriel

Duke !

Faust [looking round]

Dear son ! But what a bad citizen you are ! Am I
the Duke ? I am Doctor Faust, citizen of Troitzburg
Listen, I was talking about your son He is so wise !
Look, and you will see a supreme consciousness in his
little face You will always find it in babies' faces
They already know something of great importance
The same knowledge is in the faces of the silent dead
But neither of them can speak, and we can only read
their wisdom in the bright eyes of the babies, and on

the brow and cheeks of the dead . . . Then, when they learn to speak, the children lose their wisdom—they begin to live and to carry out their work. . . . See, how he smiles! Henry, Henry, your father has come! Ah, he knows you already! How happy you must be!

CURTAIN

SCENE XI

[*The same Square as in the third scene, but deserted except for an occasional passer-by and the guard at the Treasury.*

The merchants Segal and Pfefferschalk are seen leaving the Masons' Guildhouse, they come slowly across the square.]

Segal

It's as clear as God's daylight. If we pull the string too hard——

Pfefferschalk

—— it will break

Segal

Exactly! Our profits indeed have been scandalously cut down, but ——

Pfefferschalk

—— small profits are better than none at all

Segal

Exactly! And we can frighten the popular assembly by threatening to leave the City for ever, but ——

Pfefferschalk

—— they can tell us Make the road your dining-table.

Segal

Exactly! I was counting on Tribune Scott's ambition, and expecting great things of to-day's discussion You were rather hasty with your conclusions

Pfefferschalk

n a word, he turned us out

Segal

Exactly!

[*Mephisto, disguised as a monk, comes to meet them*]

Mephisto

Most honourable merchants, stop a moment to receive my humble blessing Ha-ha-ha! Don't you know a friend when you see one?

Pfefferschalk

Devil take me if it isn't the Baron!

Mephisto

Sh! Not so loud What did Scott say?

Pfefferschalk

He played melodrama

Segal

He was virtue itself!

Mephisto [*shaking his head*]

Then I myself must tackle him I may say I have full powers from you?

Both

Of course!

Mephisto

Mephisto

Let us go to your office I am the former Alguacil—
Baron Mephisto

Scott [startled]

What? I shall order your instant arrest

Mephisto

If you wish But you have a head on your shoulders
You will understand that if I show myself in Trotzburg
and go straight to Wilham Scott it is not for frivolous
conversation You will want to know in advance what
the business is

Scott

What is it then? Long speech between us is unthinkable
If you consider me a person of sense you will
spare me your eloquence To the point Baron What
do you want with me? Do you come with pro-
posals from Faustulus?

Mephisto

Faustulus is hopeless His game is up

Scott [smiling]

That we know

Mephisto

Let us speak definitively The merchants have decided
to leave and to submit Trotzburg to a commercial
embargo

Scott [shrugging his shoulders]

That is not true I have just been conferring with them
They are in fact afraid

Scott [*arrogantly*]

We shall overcome them !

Mephisto

The masters are discontented with the liberties of the foremen and apprentices. The measures taken by Tribune Bond are ruining all the wealthy citizens—or so they think.

Scott

I know all this better than you.

Mephisto

I hold full powers from all the merchants of the City and a good half of the Captains to suggest a revolution to you. But let us go to your room. It is inconvenient to discuss these matters in the public square.

Scott

Nobody can hear us and it is less suspicious.

Mephisto [*with a malicious smile*]

For my part I can at once put at your disposal a large sum which I have collected from the foreign enemies of Trotzburg's excessive freedom—and they are not a few ! To night I can hand over to you a million ducats in gold [*Pause*] Three days' march away I have ready in camp four thousand lancers. You can hire them at a moment's notice. William Scott let us talk like sensible people. We shall not stop short at an offer of the post of Stadthouder. Say the word and in a very short time you shall be Duke ! Put out your hand and all is yours ! You know just who must and can be bought. The extremists, all the foremen and apprentices you will then overcome at the last moment by force. Do you wish to go on ?

Scott [*look 1 f do 1*]

The devil !

Mephisto

You are not still afraid of the devil.

Scott

Come and see me at night in the garden of the Western
Tower at the foot of Cæsar's Statue

Mephisto

I shall be there

Scott

The populace is assembling Van Bond has called a
Public Assembly for this afternoon, I have only just
been informed of it, and as yet I do not know for what
purpose But, in any event, it is of no consequence

Mephisto

Keep a sharp lookout !

Scott

We must separate

[*They go out separately There come into the square a picturesque
and very mixed group of ragged people, among them Rebble
and Envie*]

Rebble

I tell you, it's usurpation ! The Tribunes are trying to
make themselves absolute

Envie

That's what they say in the City about the Tribunes

Rebble

We're getting too orderly Trotzburg is going to sleep.

[*Mephisto re enters in the disguise of a travelling musician*]

Mephisto

That's what I say, too ! Instead of one big Duke, are
we to have two little ones ? And tell me, granny, what
about equality ?

Envie

What equality have we ? True the rich are heavily
taxed, and there is no more starving or begging But,
on the other hand, what endless talk about the love of

labour and all the other virtues! Woe to him in Trotzburg who was born with a generous disposition and loves his leisure! Nowhere else in the world is there so little consideration for those who cherish their own independence and like to be their own master

Mephisto

And how crafty our benefactors are! Why, until quite recently old Father Rebble used to have crowds thronging round him and now—now they have even organised a Guild of Black Unskilled Labour and showered their favours on it, and you are almost deserted

Rebble

Except for this rabble But right is right!

Mephisto

There's nothing new under the moon I saw exactly the same thing happen in Italy at Palermo Yes and things went even further there People there began to take note how the pretended popular authority was taking control of every individual, enacting so called labour codes and strict communal regulations So those came to the front who dared to rebel against any order whatsoever

Rebble

That's the idea!

[*A murmur of approval in his following*]

Mephisto

They made a good ballad on it at Palermo I will sing it to you

[*He sings accompanying himself on the guitar*]

A merchant once in Italy
The nobles all evicted
He bought them up and finally
Crowned himself king in sovereignty
A monarch unrestricted

The workers then in turn rebelled,
And downed the merchant-master,
Their State by Labour was upheld,
From each his share of toil compelled,
To make the days speed faster !

But up, dear idlers mine ! Arise,
My gentle lazzaroni !
Now, claim your earthly paradise,
Down tools, stroll, loll about likewise,
And eat your macaroni !

Come, nerve yourselves awhile ! And, speak,—
Was ever lord so surly
As your own mates in power, who seek
To spoil six festas in the week
And work you late and early !

Before they rose you lived on tick,—
You starved, but felt the tougher !
No work, no pay now ! That's the trick
They play ! And Labour makes you sick
And how the women suffer !

Tear up the paving stones, and take
Your torch ! Come, take your coat off !
But first with lord and merchant make
A truce, and they for freedom's sake
Will help you kick your load off

Come, now, the Fifth Estate, rebel !
Rebel past all revoking !
Let conflagrations crack this shell
Of Earth and crumble it in Hell,
In its own blood still choking

Enrie [applauding loudly]

Bravo ! Bravo ! That's the song to sing them !

Mephisto

I'm a shrewd lad I am I know the very first thing to be done is to knock their law and order on the head And the head of their law and order is the Tribune van der Bond !

[*The assembly bell begins to peal*]

Mephisto

They are just beginning to assemble for the meeting We have time to spare Let us all go and have a drink, and I will tell you the rest of the tale about Palermo

[*The square begins to fill The Guilds enter with their banners led by their masters The foremen are armed The merchants few in number gather at the foot of the tribune The Secretaries and Captains of the Republic take their stations on the steps of the fountain the Elders of the City siting in armchairs on the upper platform Then Scott and Gabriel appear bareheaded in their green and red scarves*]

First Elder [rising]

Citizens ! I herewith declare open a general assembly of the citizens of Trotzburg It has been summoned by your Tribune, Gabriel van der Bond What does the Tribune wish to report to the people ?

Gabriel

Citizens for some time our foreign merchants, who are enriching themselves so grossly out of the commerce of Wellentrotz and Trotzburg have been threatening to cease intercourse with us, because we, by various enactments in the interest of the general welfare, are endeavouring to reduce their scandalous profiteering and, in a word, do not leave them in peace to plunder us

[*Jeers and cries of approval from the people*]

Pfefferschalk

This is revolting ! We are being insulted !

A Voice

Silence ! We all know what sort of birds you are !
[*Laughter*]

Gabriel

Citizens ! It is time we put an end to their threats, once and for all. An honourable seaman, Captain Niklaas, wishes to speak to you on this topic.

[*Niklaas ascends the tribune and takes off his oil cloth cap*]

Niklaas

Trotzburg ! You are being bamboozled ! Three times now I have proposed to Tribune Scott a systematic plan of action. I demonstrated that it is possible to obtain, partly by building, partly by purchase at a very reasonable price, and partly by hire, a fleet of some fifty first-rate ships. In a few months Trotzburg can be its own merchant. We mariners have worked it all out. Now, what does it mean ? To the people, not a word has ever been said about this plan ! They tell us that you would not be able to provide a sufficient number of competent clerks to purchase corn and other imports and to dispose of your own products. Stuff and nonsense ! Haven't the Trotzburgers sound heads on their shoulders ? Won't they find friends wherever they go ? Yes, we have many enemies—but friends, too. Without any fine talk I'll tell you I'd gladly drown if need be in the service of the City. But why has nothing been done about this plan ? Because the City Council has hemmed and hawed about it and forgotten it and left the people exposed to the threats of these arrogant merchants. So, although Tribune van Bond is not in charge of the Marine Department, I approached him with a complaint against his colleague.

[*Uneasy murmurs in the crowd*]

Segal

I beg leave to speak. By special leave of my good fellow-citizens !

Gabriel [insistently]

Citizen First Elder, pray grant special leave of speech to the merchant Segal.

First Elder

The merchant Segal has special leave

[*Segal mounts the tribune and bows to all sides*]

Segal

Why so much noise about it? We all the time wanted to declare to day that we accept all the new laws. There you are! So as to live in peace. We bow to you [*He bows*]. And do you, if you will, bow to us! And, if you do not want to bow to me,—no matter! Why quarrel about it? Why should you buy ships when we have plenty? And we are your servants? You see? Now it's all settled [*He comes down the steps*]. So why all this disturbance! As though we had any quarrel with Trotzburg, or what!

[*A triumphant roar of laughter from the people, cheers, a wild yelling*]

Gabriel [triumphantly]

Citizens, great Trotzburg overcomes all its difficulties! This is because it is young and strong. Mortal man gives way to the immortal city. Citizens! Now hear me! I am very conscious that your Tribunes have in these days exhausted their mandate. The war is over. To-day there is no menace on any side. Within the City reign peace and prosperity. We—I and my dear colleague, William Scott—will therefore now hand over our charge into the hands of new Tribunes, and not in any grudging manner. We both beg you to release us [*He bows in all four directions*]. Release us in peace from our high office.

Scott [pale and trembling, aside]

That was not agreed between us, Gabriel!

Gabriel [aside]

Make your protest then, if you dare, Scott!

Scott [aside]

You have outwitted me

Gabriel [aside]

You will soon be thanking me for it

[The people is moved Uncertain murmurs and agitated talking]

First Elder

I beg our worthy and beloved Tribunes to withdraw their resignation

Voices

Withdraw! Withdraw!

Gabriel

Our decision is irrevocable

[Rebble, Enrie Mephisto and their party have meanwhile joined the crowd]

Mephisto

Oh, these sly ambitious statesmen! Look, Father Rebble, how they flatter the people! Truly they are the new Cæsars. Now's the time to do what I said!

[Rebble impetuously shakes his head as with a sudden resoluteness]

Rebble

Grant leave of speech to old Rebble!

First Elder

Citizen Rebble has leave

Rebble [mounting the tribune]

Citizen van Bond, give me your hand. Many a time have I tried to go against you, but you always disarmed me. To day, again, I had decided to lift my hand against you, as a dangerous man, the people's favourite. But I see you are also honourable. It is grievous to me to have to acknowledge that here among you there is nothing for me to rebel against, but that is what I must now admit. Yet there's plenty for old Rebble to do. All about us slavery still reigns supreme. Farewell, then, good people, citizens of Trotzburg! I go to spread throughout the world your atmosphere of liberty!

[A storm of applause cheers and cries of approval]

Mephisto [hissing in the crowd]

Curses! Even he fails me! Despair, despair!

Gabriel

Father Rebble! Great, indeed immeasurable are your services, you foolish, insolent, turbulent demigod! You are our father For you there is always a place amongst our elders Papa Rebble, before you go, bless me and Trotzburg!

Rebble [turning to Gabriel and then to the people]

My blessing on you who resign authority,—and on you, the free People, my blessing! May you for ever march on!

[He descends from the tribune in the midst of a touching silence]

First Elder

While we are here assembled, I desire to give the artist Dellabella leave to speak, for some time now he has been wishing to say a few words to the people

[Dellabella mounts the tribune and bows low]

Dellabella

Mighty People, at your command I am building you a Pantheon in which it is your desire that there shall be gathered together the festal symbols of your birth and your life, a temple where also the best of your citizens shall sleep As yet there is little built, though the work is advancing rapidly Meanwhile, bearing in mind the City's desire that a prominent place in the monument shall be dedicated to the genius of its founder, I decided to set aside a special altar in honour of the foundation of Trotzburg, with the inscription

VRBI FAVSTAE FAVSFOOVT

Dellabella

And may the humble artist, although but recently become a citizen, be permitted to say how he wishes that Faust himself may yet return alive to us, and that in good time his dust may be laid to rest beneath that altar !

Gunther Hunt [*in the dress of a secretary, standing on the steps, raises his hand and starts singing*]

Our sovereign city, roused in might,
In Titan strength to reign,—
King Trotzburg in the morning light
Shall throne it o'er the plain !

And he shall tell the Duke Still lead,—
First citizen thereby,
Be first among your peers indeed,
But sovereign—that am I !

[*The people in chorus repeat the second stanza As the sound of their voices is ringing out there appears on the open platform by the balustrade a tall man, somewhat bowed, in a blue cloak and a broad brimmed hat that covers his eyes He hears the verses of the hymn sung to their end then throws off his hat and opens his pleated cloak It is Faust His face is full of joy his eyes are glistening The flowing folds of his white robes give majesty to his figure*

Movements in the crowd and cries of Faust ! The Duke !]

Faust [*opening his arms as if to embrace the people*]

Children,—my dear, wise, brave children ! Greetings to you ! Here am I amongst you, with you, face to face with you,—come at your call, to be with you an equal citizen of free Trotzburg ! You have taught me how to prize the genius of the people Long time from the height of my Tower had I been watching, and my heart, from doubt and confusion, passed to tremulous love Children, brothers, accept me ! I have seen and heard how wisely and rightly you have pursued your great resolutions I have looked upon this populous, motley hued, mighty, inexplicable being—the crowd, with its flowing stream its swift movements, and its voices—upon its masses moving like the waters of the

ocean, but informed with reason and alive, alive in all its elemental impulses Children, brothers, I believe—I believe in you! Gather your harvest grow, enlighten the world, build, fill it with thought with understanding, and ye shall be as gods For the gods are a vision of what the might of men shall be My greetings to you for this also, that you have solved many of the problems that weighed heavily on me Terror and doubt have been scattered like clouds before the wind that fade away in the sunset with the last misty veil of death Yes, I have returned to you, to be with you, to be of use to you to win your love by mine That is my wish Will you accept me?

[A wild ovation Cries of Faust! Faust! A great waving of hats and kerchiefs and fluttering of banners The old Sexton slowly shuffles along in his slippers to Faust from behind]

Sexton

Here am I—here, great Duke! Do you remember the old man? I know the changes to ring when the hour strikes!

[He smiles craftily goes down to the door of the bell tower opens it and enters his keys jangling]

Faust

Dear kindly children! I thank you for your thought of me in the memorial I also have brought you a gift I have brought with me an iron worker The Council of the Twelve Masters has already seen him The Masters will tell you that he lives on fire and water, which render him capable of every kind of movement He can saw, drill grind, hew, forge He can be adapted to move heavy weights on dry land and on the water, in the fields and underground You will be able to improve upon him at need His possibilities are endless The most arduous toil can be accomplished with the help of these fire and water machines, thus leaving you free for finer work for the pursuit of knowledge, and for the pleasures of life Thus is my gift to you, children and brothers on the day of reconciliation

[A loud cheers and cries of delight]

Faust

Children, there is now peace for us, a deep full peace
 And now,—already past the threshold of old age, now
 do I feel happiness The joy grows and swells in my
 heart [*Suddenly he presses both hands to his heart, and
 staggers*] Children, what is this? What is happening
 to me? Something unheard of impossible
 [*Gabriel supports him*] What now? It is growing,
 expanding, my heart but lately so poor! Now it
 embraces you all—all—in itself And now are in me,
 part of me, all the pulsations of life Here, here all
 the joys of children, the loves of youth, dreams of
 maidens, husbands anxieties mothers' tenderness, the
 gentle sadness of old age Here, here is every aspiration,
 all honour, and the blood of all Oh, stream,—broad,
 turbulent stream of marvellous blood flowing into my
 breast! I can see no bounds to it now! I am you—
 all of you! I am all others! I am the many, I am
 the infinitude! And all things—all things I am!
 Again, once again, what once I felt before, though not
 with such dizzy power, such overwhelming sweetness
 Ah! This—the heavens, the sun, the earth, and we,
 friends, all this and we are one! There afar, are the
 shores of past life, the piteous beginning, the grievous
 road And, here, my new home, my future, golden,
 azure, calling calling me Let us go, let us go on!
 There is no death! There is life, so immense, beyond
 all surmise Wonderful Triumphant What
 strength what an insurmountable translucent,
 glittering, foaming wave

[*Suddenly the hour strikes decisively While its note still is echoed
 the bells begin to sound a carillon majestic in its peal like
 silver, peals*]

Faust [*with a wide gesture of embrace*]

Life We Moment of happiness, abide!

[*He falls on Gabriel's arm A physician hurries anxiously to his
 side Intense silence in the crowd The carillon of the
 cathedral bells sings and echoes proudly and triumphantly
 like a chorus in the heavens above*]

Physician

Faust is dead.

Gabriel

Faust is alive in all things ! He lives in us ! He lives for ever !

[Heads are bared The banners are dipped The voices of the bells break into louder peals, still more sunny and victorious To slow time and majestically, the people sing their hymn]

Our sovereign city, roused in might . . .

[The curtain is slowly lowered while they sing]

THE END

The Magi

CHARACTERS

Andromenes, Chief of the Magi.

<i>Sempronius,</i> <i>Prasius,</i> <i>Amulius,</i> <i>Rhegius,</i> <i>Hermionius,</i>	}	Magi.
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Disciples of the Magi

Damnus, a boy

Dorotheus, Abbot of the Monastery of the Sacred Thorns

Hierodoulos, an old monk

Theognostos, a young monk.

Other Monks.

Manessa, a Priestess of Apollo

An Old Woman.

Rek, a denizen of the Nether World.

Other Beings of the Nether World

Spirit Voices

Voices of the Salamanders.

An Angel

The White Angel

The Steel Angel

Choir of Those Ascending the Mountain

Dionysus

SCENES

- Scene 1 *On the Isle of Phares, the Terrace Garden*
" 2 *On the Isle of Phares, an Alley in the Garden*
" 3 *The Nether World*
" 4 *On the Isle of Pharès, the Council Room*
" 5 *On the Isle of Pharès, the Cell of Andromenes*
, 6 *On the Isle of Trezos*
" 7. *On the Isle of Pharès, the Garden*
" 8 *Manessa's Studio*
" 9 *In other Spheres*
" 10 *Chamber of Sempronius*
" 11 *On the Isle of Pharès, the Terrace Garden*
" 12 *The Nether World*
" 13 *A Misty Mountain Side*

SCENE I

Amilius and Sempronius are walking in a garden amidst rose-bushes. Amilius has an elderly appearance a lofty forehead suggesting baldness a beard thick and grizzled, eyes of extraordinary calm, very slow in their movements and always wide open. His manner is slow and confident.

Sempronius is still young but his yellowish face is wrinkled. His eyes glitter with a brightness of excitability, he has a mobile thin mouth his movements are impulsive he is always in a fever.]

Amilius

Sempronius, no,—thy self-doubts only seem
Ridiculous to us assembled. For
Thou art our Teacher's pride, our School's adornment
I often with amazement gaze upon
The explosions of thy genius, those bursts
Of fire invincible, oh, it is almost grievous
To look into those bubbling wells, in which
Thy soul is seething. Nay, how rich thou art,
Sempronius, immeasurably rich. Could envy
Midst the disciples of the holy Mage
Here nestle, then we all should be envenomed
With an o'erwhelming envy of thee—of thee

Sempronius

I listen, and I ponder, how Amilius,
A mind so splendid, fails to grasp what I
In very truth avail. Or would he thus
Console me? Am I then a child? Ah, no—
But a volcano, a burning fountain, ever
Boiling, straying, surging out the abyss
Ye Gods! Am I to fashion sweet laudations
That scarcely veil my own censoriousness?
Volcano, say I? Fiery fountain? No,
I would I were a silent lake, wherein
To mirror radiance of the skies above,
If so I may not be the sky itself
But thou art peaceful. Sacred wisdom, daughter
Of all the harmonies, gleams in thine eyes
Unfaltering, unblinking—No, I'm but

An ape ! And soon—yea, soon—I shall begin
To play at magic Ha ! Why laughest thou ?

[*Rhegius enters hurriedly to meet them He is young, swarthy,
hunchbacked*]

Rhegius

Teachers,—the prophetess, the wise Manessa,
Will visit us to-day, and the whole school's
Astir with it ! We have just heard her ship
Arrived from Milla here this very morning
Our Father laughed, and said that we should have
Experience thereby But were Manessa
An angel even, and wiser than Amilius,
Reflect on this, my friends, she is a maiden,
And of rare beauty, it will be strange to see
How this new force may change the crystal's nature
On our own Isle, Phaics,—so strong the force

Amilius

I am amazed ! Our Father must be jesting—
Playing with us And thou dost say that I
Am calmly wise ? No, I'm a pedant only
But he, our Father oh, weigh this, Sem-
pronius

He is inscrutable, the prophetess
Manessa, and all of us—the world, the demons,
The gods—are unto him but toys And he
Is earnest in his playing as children are
He is a child He laughs—he is so wise

Sempronius

Manessa ? Ah, I am aflame to see
This famous seeress of Christ's foe, Apollo
Yet, stay ! Whose singing do I hear ?

Amilius

There, Rhegius ?

Who sings

Rhegius

It is the neophytes,
Whose choir now greets the marvellous Manessa,
And chants to her afar a hymn of praise
The Sage has written in her honour

Amilius

The sage once more is turning poet ? Strange !
For fifteen years now he has writ no verse,
Nor touched the lyre

Rhegius

This hymn he had all ready
He has been teaching it to Hermonius
Who sang it with the youths,—but listen now,
How well it sounds

Amilius

Quite well

Sempronius

Quite well, too well !

HYMN

By wisdom's road, on paths of asperity,
On the strait causeway of austerity,
 These my disciples do I guide
One goal they seek, oh beauteous maiden, may
They touch the hem of Beauty's raiment, they
 Are satisfied
I have prepared them, they, with veneration,
Shall all acclaim the Ray of revelation,—
 Thyself reveal !
They are the seekers, thou the radiance,
Come, hear our hymnal of obeisance,—
 Passion's appeal !

Sempronius

A mawkish hymn, I swear ! This from our Sage !
Such flattery ! A sort of madrigal !
A child had done as well ! But if Manessa
Is wise she will shrug her shoulders !

Amilius

Strange indeed !

Rhegius

How beautiful must be this prophetess
To whom the Holy One himself writes lays

SCENE II

*[Another ally in the same garden Sempronius enters quickly
A small boy, Damrus, meets him]*

Damrus

Sempronius, not that way! She's at the port,
And I am running to see her Hasten!

Sempronius

Thou fool! I am not looking for Manessa,
I seek my solitude

[Damrus stops in astonishment Then he continues on his way]

Sempronius

Manessa!

So excited are they all, that now my pride
Of heart has changed my purpose Let this farce
Distract the Father I will play no part
In it! Here, on this hidden bench I'll sit
And force my mind to dwell on cold geometry
Sit down Sempronius! Yes, that is right Now,
take

Thy stick Now, analyse these triangles

*[Sempronius becomes absorbed in his drawing Suddenly
through flowering bushes Manessa enters parting them
with her white arms and looks at him with a smile He
does not notice her]*

Manessa

Sempronius!

Sempronius

Who is it? Thou—Manessa?
I should have known thee! But why art thou here?—
I see—our Teacher is testing us—And I
Am all confused! So—jeer at me! For I
Am at a loss Should I now curse thee, as
A peril that invades my circles like
The murderer that came on Archimedes
Or should I else be courteous celebrating
Thee with preans—rival the flattery
So mawkish wherewith thou wast heralded
Even by our Teacher midst our neophytes?

Manessa

Thou art Sempronius ? That pleases me !
 I like to catch big beetles And, Sempronius,
 I see thee eager for temptation—but
 I will not tempt thee No,—thy hand, my
 friend ,
 And bare to me thy soul Inquisitive
 Am I indeed, nor can Manessa spend
 Much time here So—thou art ambitious ?

Sempronius

I am , I am ambitious I would even
 Surpass the teacher

Manessa

And—a wealth of thought
 Mars the pulsations of a passion, too ?

Sempronius

Disquietude can mar it Oh, Manessa,
 I want a little ice to cool my fever
 An iron ring to coop my heart, which beats
 So hard, my poor sick heart ! I want repose !
 Were I Amilius, I should now be climbing
 The road that leads on high

Manessa

Oh my good friend !
 Good friend, cast off pretensions thou shouldst soar
 So high Thou hast no wings Yet be not wroth
 Get thee support amongst the astral demons
 Be great—be great ! For this thou canst be—great ,
 But good thou canst not be Be bold, Sempronius,—
 Evil !

Sempronius

But thou—how good thou art !

Manessa

Do thou
 Be boldly evil ! Like the Spirit of Darkness,
 Grapple in stern conflict with the Teacher

Trust to my wisdom, all is in strength, in strength,—
 Not in the budded flower Yea, yea, believe me,—
 I am not tempting thee Thou art my friend,
 A sister's counsel I am giving thee
 I prophesy that thou wilt quell the Teacher
 Till he own thee the stronger Thou art great.
 But choose thy pathway To the fish, the sea—
 Not flights aerial

Sempronius

How wise thou art!

How beautiful!

Manessa

Do so and willingly
 Will I be thine when thou art conqueror

Sempronius

Oh, what a fool—a fool—I was to shun thee!

Manessa

Let us press hand to hand!

Sempronius

A kiss a kiss!

Manessa

When thou art conqueror

Sempronius

The Teacher comes

Manessa

What tells thee that?

Sempronius

The beating of my heart

[The sage Andromenes enters along the path a white dove on his shoulder He has ornate garments and his grey head is wreathed in ivy His white beard is fantastically tied with a flaming golden ribbon His old age is fresh He is smiling He stops and looks at Sempronius and Manessa with affectionate irony]

Manessa

Thou seest, Saint, we are already friends

Andromenes

I see that thou already art guiding him

Manessa

On the true path But, thy disciple, he
Had found his own true path without my aid

Andromenes

His own true path ! Yea, wisely dost thou speak
For, truly, wiser folk too often seek
The one true path His own true path,—yes, this
Is the seeker's goal

Sempronius

Is, then, for each of us
His own path to salvation ?

Manessa

For each one
There is a path that leads to perfecting
The motley manifest of his own soul

Sempronius

But in these perfectings, souls are not equal.
Is it thus ?

Manessa

Souls indeed are manifold ,
But each in flower is beauty

Sempronius

And each good ?

[*Manessa smiles, Andromenes laughs gently*]

Sempronius

Why deem ye me a child ? The thought is clear
Then evil in flower is beauty Is't not thus ?
And strength serves as the gauge for lofty minds
That can outgrow at once both good and evil

Manessa

Yes, and yet no But why out-riddle that ?
 Thou carriest thy fate writ on thy hand,
 Thy path fore-featured there, thy destiny,
 Which thou art bounden to pursue, if thou
 Willest to give what thou canst give But that,
 Whether it shall be noble, shall be blessed,
 Is not for thee to ordain ! Man is a mock
 Contemptible who wears another's garb

Andromenes

It was not idly that I decked my hair
 With ivy, plaited my beard, bethought me of
 My harp and to pour out as once of old
 My speech in poesy This mine isle, Manessa,
 Breathes mystery Tempt thou my anchorites !
 Shine like the sun, and let what will shoot up,—
 Blossom of purple or blue, with fragrance fresh
 Or dizzying, or with sweet golden fruit,—
 Or may-be berries flushed with poisoned death
 Thus well, methinks do I assort my garden,
 Me seems, the sun that shines on it not only
 Will quicken harvests grown for use or joy,
 But that the flowering of my plants shall be
 Beautiful, bloom what may—And we, Manessa,
 We both love beauty

Sempronius

Holy master mine,
 ' thou not dread there grow some evil weed
 to poison thine own breath in breathing it ?

Andromenes

May-be that in my garden there will grow
 A plant with gaudy foliage which will bloom
 Into a cup with lovely, languid perfume,
 To drench the air around it with my death
 Then my grey head will swirl in a sweet maze
 And I shall drop down into earth's bosom, then,
 With song for Heaven's ears, my immortal spirit
 Shall wrench its way to freedom from my corse

I know the holy judges will not let me
 Be wafted straight from earth into the Fire ,
 But I shall linger bodiless near earth—
 For this offence, that I have loved too well
 Mankind and animals and vegetation,—
 Crystals,—the frame of things,—water,—the air,—
 The twinkling stars,—the sunrise and the sunset,—
 The melancholy moon,—the bitter sweet
 Refrain of earthly tragedy,—the throb
 And habit of semi-spiritual flesh,—
 The flowering and the wilting in the glide
 And drift of Time I know, too, that the spirit
 Even more mightily will be torn asunder
 Between its yearning for its home of Fire
 And memory of earthly tribulations—
 Of mankind's patterned uniform of life

Manessa

Thus, even thus, great master !—My soul lies
 Humble at foot of thine, its younger sister
 Wherefor then should we fear ? Our sight hath
 pierced
 The curtain of the temple, and hath seen
 The kindliness of God's own smile And, truly,
 The play is noble, and yet more engrossing
 When weighted down in terror half-dissembled,
 In torture from without, which cannot harm
 Our self in its reality

Sempronius

How confident ye are ! But I,—but I
 Perhaps ye are preparing for me slyly
 The part of Judas —Why am I so black ?
 Why have ye not in love washed my soul pure ?
 All that is black strong love can purify
 Whither would ye then drag me ?—Oh, thy smile,
 Father, is terrible—as when thou gazest
 On the green pond where pike devour the dace
 And thou, Manessa ? What ? Thou smilest, too ?
 With friendship thou enticest me, and crafty
 Pledgest thyself to me, provokest me

To strife with him, my Teacher ! To a flame
 Thou blowest up my vaulting dreams of pride !
 Whither now drag ye me ? Would play with me ?

Andromenes

Boy, bring me here my harp

Sempronius

Would he now sing ?

Voices behind the Stage

The Master would now sing

[*The stage fills with disciples the older ones in white dress, and the younger in ornamented dress The boy brings a golden harp Manessa sits by Andromenes and listens, leaning her chin on her beautiful hand, her dark hair low down on her forehead The whole scene is sunlit The clouds are effaced in the blue sky The birds hush Clusters of flowers, white and lilac, rock to and fro, listening Andromenes sings*]

Create thyself ! I bless this gay device
 The powers' creative play I glorify
 I shall exalt it, high in Paradise,
 When I shall die
 I am at ease In Hell will I indite
 A prayer, where souls in voiceless fire are tossed,
 If, in a passing dream, I lived life's fight,
 And played and lost
 I found in ocean's dark abysses and took thence
 A talisman, a pearl which none shall have
 from me,
 Whereby, through masks, obscureness, frank-
 incense,
 The actors' faces I can see
 Lead, dancer—lead thy dance of suffering,
 Or a victorious pæan !
 My hands shall ever clap thy triumphing,
 Great god Pan !
 The spiral choir, the whirling at the feast,
 Let us all dance, beauty is all around
 Praise be to Thee for beauty in the beast,

For poverty with lustre crowned
I love the veil broad flung upon my sight,
The veil of day's imperious sweep,
But if death should disclose the depths of night,
Or e'en of sleep,
Or e'en a sleep, quite visionless,—nay, more—
An emptiness of space,—
My flaming soul shall whisper, ' I adore
Thy wondrous grace ! '

*[He is silent They all stand deeply pensive Sempronius
wrings his hands silently and leaves in haste]*

SCENE III

[In the background a ladder of innumerable steps, the top of which is lost in the heights. A dim light shines from above, but everything is misty. In the deep crevices and burrows something is busiling. Rek, who has imbecile eyes and is covered with fur, enters and drinks from a pool, scooping up the water in his ape like hand.]

Rek

Once again light-streaks a-flare,
 Stirring restless moan and groan
 Of my evil neighbours there
 Out, brief gleam, and let us keep
 Darkness in our narrow lair,—
 In vast movelessness of sleep
 Rest forever unaware !

Voices

My closed eye aches fearfully !—
 Mine has long since ceased to see !—
 Someone's singeing my grey back !—
 Who is't wakes our suffering ?—
 Pains wrack me, of all hells King.—

[Out of other dens there can be heard a bellowing and roaring, an indistinguishable murmur. Sempronius descends the ladder cautiously.]

Sempronius

Silence, ye beasts ! And be ye hushed, ye vermin !

[He steps off.]

Here I breathe easily ! My thoughts are calmer
 Now to find Rek, that idiot brutish man !

Rek

Thou'rt here again !
 Thou wilt torture me !
 I fear thine eyes,—
 I fear thy hands !
 Thou wilt look again,
 And move thy hands,

I shall sleep once more ,
 Then when I return,
 I shall gnaw at stones,
 I shall batter my head
 In suffering,—
 But why ?

Sempronius

Silence, thou cur ! Now sit in front of me,
 And stare into mine eyes Silent ? And still !
 So, gaze to gaze surrendered ! Now I touch
 Thy low flat brow with Jupiter's strong finger,
 And thou wilt sleep Thou sleepest

Yes, he sleeps —

Now, Spirit of the Depths, into this body
 Enter, and hearken me, then speak I know
 Thou lovest not loss of time, or waste of words
 Ah, now those eyes have opened and I see
 No turbid look, but like a lioness's
 The green of those grave eyes is clear and fiery,
 And black the dauntlessly deep pupils stare ,
 Their vision passes through me, beyond But
 whither ?

Into myself ? To the unknown ? I love
 Thine eyes, my Rek, when thou art thus transformed !
 I love thine eyes, and I could sit here thus
 A hundred years in front of thee, and steep
 My gaze in thy sage tranquil countenance
 But, to the point ! I am resolved now 'Tis
 Writ in the stars To me is power ordained
 And I shall be the king of all the Magi ,
 Like a red comet shall my banner wave
 Across black skies —Further, 'tis known that I
 Must kill the Teacher—and I shall do it So,
 Tell me, now when at last the will cries ' Ready
 Is there no hindrance ? Oh, I know that I
 Shall suffer fearsome torment Well what then ?
 Desist ? I am impelled to it by the lure
 Of fame, and by the red mouth of Manessa
 What then ? To wed the glamour of renown,
 And bite her lips with tyrant love's sharp kiss—

And then ? What then ? To suffer ! That is the
doom !—

To flash, a quiver of purple sparks, and then
Into the dark be flung, a smouldering firebrand
But flash I will, wilt thou grant strength to me !
Shall I accomplish ?

Rek [after a long pause]

Yes !

*[The whole abyss is filled with smoke Shrieks are heard, then
the noise of terrible voices Silence, a vapour gathers, thick,
of a bluish yellow]*

SCENE IV

[The Mages' Council Room It is a half-open veranda on two sets of strong pillars One of each pair is red, the other blue The front of the stage is filled with a garden of flowering plants, approached from the veranda by a broad staircase]

Some of the older disciples are already sitting on the marble bench of the veranda Others are walking in groups round a lofty chaur

Amilius is conversing with Prasius Prasius is very thin blue eyed with a forehead markedly pale and has golden locks]

Amilius

Oh, Prasius, of a woman—canst thou speak
Thus of a woman? Surely thou art no foe
To the weaker half of generation,—thou,
So generous of heart that thou dost fondle
The very animals, and the more readily
Hadst known the love of women, had the Teacher
Not barred them from this isle of stillness Yet
Now, and for this, more worthy still is she,
Godlike Manessa, of thy gentleness

Prasius

Yet did the Master hitherto permit
No woman here, Amilius Why, then,
Resolved he thus to love men more than women?
I, I can love a lion or a horse,
But hold and keep them by me, that I will not
They say that women can redeem the soul
From afar, then, jointly to seek salvation
Were hard The Demiurge created sex,
Sex has no function in eternity
Where death is, birth must be, and both are but
Defections of the flesh—with this distinction,
That death is loathsome, whilst the heat of love
Enraptures and, with birth involves the capture
Of soul and flesh at once And so, my friend,
Not purposeless is passion so inflamed,—
Not vain fierce jealousy, passion's close warder

And bitterest fruit of all hell's covetousness
 Truly, Manessa is wise But, were she radiant
 With no such magic beauty,—hovered there
 No shrewd cajolery upon her lips,—
 In her brown eyes blazed no fires Aphrodisiac —
 Nay, but it is so !—more, were she a vestal
 Heroine like my sister Thekla,—still
 I should hold her a vessel of temptation

Amilius

I had not thought the saintliest of all
 Our brethren here were so accessible
 To the influence of fleshly beauty

Prasius

No !

I am not accessible—and that, because
 I watch myself I am severe, unbending,
 With all such promptings of my heart I know
 How ready 'tis to unlock its gates I stand
 On guard, a sentry unrelieved, fixing
 His keen cold glance upon the rampart there
 But the unvigilant shall surely perish
 Through this Manessa's evil spirit What though
 In her 'tis unintended, yet is it
 There, always there, as in a lapdog

Amilius

Stay !

Sempronius—look !—clad all in black and purple !
 His cloak new, fastened with a gaudy clasp !

Prasius

He is a danger now He is possessed
 Erstwhile he strove, but now he has delivered
 Himself unto the demons

Amilius

Prasius,

I deem it strange that thou, the best of us,
 Should also be so bitter

Prasius

He alone

Loves virtue that hates evil — But farewell —

My friends are here and among them Johannes

Last night they promised to reflect upon

Job's well side converse with his wife They call me

[*Prasius moves away The hunchback Rhegius immediately comes up to Amilius*]

Rhegius

Oh kind Amilius pray give me one—

One moment of your counsel only one

Amilius

What is it? Thou art weeping?

Rhegius

Weeping!

Amilius

Why?

Rhegius

I am a hunchback

Amilius

Yet Rhegius Rhegius

Rhegius

I am a hunchback but I am not blind

Amilius

Oh Rhegius!

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One moment of your counsel, only one

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Rhegius

Weeping !

Amilius

Why ?

Rhegius

I am a hunchback

Amilius

Yet Rhegius, Rhegius

Rhegius

I am a hunchback, but I am not blind

Amilius

(*to Rhegius*)

Our Master, why hath he not closed our hearts
 To iniquitous seducement—by decree ?
 My heart, at least ? May we, the Magi, wed
 At will ? Surround ourselves with scores of maidens ?
 Is that allowed ? Oh, then, the worse for us !
 I see this terrible beauty, and—oh !—my soul
 Bursts open and my body is on fire
 How shall I live ? For I am all desire,
 Carnal desire,—beastlike, Amilius,—
 Foul and disgusting On my couch last night
 I was encompassed all about with visions
 Most horrid, shameful Yet something remained
 Still proud and pure within my heart—something
 That groaned with pain,—and then its groan was
 quenched
 By the wolfish howl of lust Amilius,
 I dare not now approach the Master, dare not—
 The Holy Master But she—she comes,
 Manessa
 Accursèd and desired ! I go, or else
 The fiend will gain control of me and I
 Shall be shown shameless here before you all
 Away !

[*He runs off*]

Amilius [*looking after him*]

Oh, pitiful !

[*Andromenes suddenly comes up to Amilius from behind the bushes*]

Andromenes

How grand he is !

Amilius

Master, thou here !

Andromenes

How hot the fire consumes him !
 Which now were well, sage friend,—to bid Manessa
 Clasp him, this hunchback, to her bosom,—lavish
 Caresses, feed and lull his hungry love ?

Or let him molten burn in his hot passion,
 And in some feat pour forth torrential lava ?
 Such passion cannot be unfruitful either
 'Tis tempered or converted to an act
 Portentous But here is Manessa now
 This question we will put in solemn council —
 My brother Magi let our flutes now sound
 A Mellic melody and so to our seats !
 And while the music plays take thought thereafter
 We will debate this matter earnestly
 And in the presence of divine Manessa

[The drawing refrain of a flute is heard The Magi move to their seats The tribune in the midst of the flowers remains empty each speaker in turn ascending it The Father sits in the centre of the veranda on the throne Manessa approaches him as if to sit at his feet]

Andromenes

Nay, on the throne Manessa sit more fit
 Were it that I at thy feet sat !

Manessa

Nay beauteous
 Suffer me to be thy slave this while

Andromenes [laughs]

Manessa

How dear to me thy guile ! Thy guileless guile—
 Thou knowest how translucent ! Even as is
 Thy silvery apparel dear to me —
 The bracelets on thy wrists and feet, the heavy
 Necklace on thy soft bosom the woven cover
 Of thy rebellious hair Iea guileless stly
 Dost thou bedeck thyself Manessa Yet
 Fairer a hundred times more wouldst thou be,
 Wert thou to cast off all thine ornament
 And shine before us in thy nakedness
 Whiter than Phryne But to me Manessa
 Still greater joy it were didst thou put off
 Thy fragrant earthly body and show thyself
 Naked in indolent astral form
 Lurking with charm of starry fle h

Even the very wisest of the wise
 For body is but a garment, clouding vision,
 Hiding the spirit that would dazzle us—
 Our eyes unready—didst thou radiate
 Thy light into the gloom of wingless souls

Manessa [covering her face with her hands]

Sweet, sweeter than the flute, this flattery !
 Lo, with a golden spider-web of words
 Hast thou enchained me Sing to me my spider,—
 Sing me my life, my Sage For I adore
 Thy genius

Andromenes [laughs]

My genius is waiting
 In its coarse chrysalis my wings are trembling—
 Wings of a blue and golden butterfly

Manessa

Oh I adore thy genius !

Andromenes

Soon shall we wed, with the all-lustrous wreath
 Of great Apollo—there beyond, Manessa

Amelius

None now can hear their words their very tones
 Merge in a garland with the singing flute

First Disciple

The Holy Father's dove begins to sing

Second Disciple

Look where that bush of lilies has now flowered

Third Disciple

Look, in the sky, although it is daylight
 A star has glittered with a diamond gleam

Fourth Disciple

Look, are not the great Master's eyes like stars ?

Fifth Disciple

Are not Manessa's wondrous hands like lilies ?

Amilius

Mysterious and sacred is their speech —

Hermonius

To night the flute hath charmed our hearts , the sages
Are silent Good Amilius, will the Master
Reprove me if I sing now to the flute ?
Thou knowest he loves my voice

Amilius

Sing on, Hermonius

Sempronius [on the other side of the veranda]

How shall I hold my tears ? Oh, bitterness !
And now Hermonius prepares to sing '
They torture me with beauty

Hermonius [sings]

I reflect not —
And I know nought,—
With the flute I sing to thee ,
Like a flow ret
White and simple
Flow ret neath a dark pine tree
And my verses,
Unentrancing
As a sip of water cold,
Are as peaceful
As the rustling
When the tree tops gently scold
Mage and master
Thou art passing
And maybe wilt hear the beat,
As a garland
Of word music
That a mage lays at thy feet —

Hyacinths here,
 Bathed in moonlight ,
 Corals from the deep-sea bed ,
 Scents of resin,—
 Of wild strawberry,—
 Mirth of saints high overhead
 Pure white marble,—
 Pale blue twilight,—
 Healing mead's translucency ,
 Sound of speaking,—
 Summer lightning,—
 Corn-ears hanging heavily
 Hard is easy,—
 Far is near now,—
 To full compass hearts expand ,
 Bliss awaits thee,—
 Brimming chalice,—
 God attends on thy command

[*A long pause Sempronius sobs, bites his hand, and is silent*]

Andromenes

Let us begin debate

Amulius

The Magi all
 Are strung to great endeavour , name the theme,
 Andromenes, that thou hast set to-day

Andromenes

This is the theme —But stay now, where is Rhegius?
 I see him yonder ! That red thorn-bush there,
 With prickly boughs conceals him from our view ,
 But he can hear us —This, then, is the theme —
 Whene'er our passion kindles with the flame
 Of Aphrodite the Omnipotent,
 Which course shall profit better of these twain
 To mount the throne of love despotic,—harness
 Joy triumphant unto our chariot,—
 Or pine and burn, shed tears and blood, unmanned,—
 Yet grip the heart in adamantine claws
 Of will, eyes raised to the zenith, and so forge

Into a song or feat heroic, all
 The measureless regret, the unmeasured yearning?—
 This is the theme—a wide one Is love, then,
 The road to golden bliss and sweet content,
 Or—the disease that generates the pearl?
 The first of us to speak shall surely be
 Our Praxius—Oh, Manessa friend of mine,
 In all our treasure we have nought more precious
 Than this austere and beatific spirit,
 The sacred discipline sits beautiful
 Upon his countenance—in very truth
 Athene's self, snow-pure stern-eyed, firm-lipped

Praxius

The Master's word is law and I obey
 I had not spoken else I must premise
 That I in such themes am not versed—am not
 Acquainted in Armida's courts—yet speak
 Love's happiness!
 Ah, yes—there is a happy love, which but
 The shadow of the flesh clouds and pollutes
 For love is fleshless, so is happiness
 To utter in one breath the mystic words
 Of Love and Happiness with the coarse terms
 Of passion, lust and flesh is grossly wrong
 What—what can passion's wedding e'er confer?
 Brutish appeasement for one moment, then
 A melting of that fever—bred of hell
 Although so beauteous—as Passion known
 That road is always dreary There the fiend
 Has gilt the melancholy of the void
 He whose clear eyes can pierce the enchanted veil,
 Abominates, and forthwith turns from it—
 Then what is passion unconsol'd? Disease!
 I wonder that our Teacher seems to hope,
 Out of a savage ailment or its grave
 Some fruit should grow of medicinal balm,
 Or higher principle! No,—from that grave
 Passion will rise anew, an evil ghoul,
 And strangle life Heed how ye play with fire,—
 And may the angel of virginity
 With his cool wing fan all our hearts to peace!

PAUSE

Andromenes

Manessa, truly I said we have no treasure
 Dearer than Prasius here upon Pharès

Manessa

Thus do they speak upon the neighbouring isle
 Of saintly Dorotheus, those black monks

Andromenes [smiles]

And well! A marvellous orchard he has planted,
 My dear and blissful brother Dorotheus
 And wonderful his flowers But only white
 Are there desired—lilies, jasmynes,
 The mulky lilac, and the shy may-lily,
 And many others Wondrous is the white
 Garland the wise and blessed father offers
 To God,—to God who loves sweet posies well
 But God smiles, turns his eyes away, and asks
 The Archangels “Where are the other colours?”
 Hath light no other aspect now on earth?”
 Archangel Raphael then also smiles,
 In answer pointing his palm wand at my
 Own modest flower garden—Now, Manessa,
 Hear my Amilius speak,—my pale blue flower

Amilius

In harmony of worlds do I believe
 And in a cosmos boundless and magnificent
 As the Creator hath designed me,
 That and no other I too wish to be
 The Lord he made the brilliant lightning flash,
 And then, to make the brilliance brighter, he
 Needed and wrought deep shadow Such a shadow
 Be my life, then—let sorrows of my heart
 But serve this way the beauty of the universe
 The Lord he fashioned wondrous melody,
 Triumphant resolving broken notes
 And false discords Then let my every sigh
 Be as the leading note for wondrous chords—

So my woe serve the beauty of the universe

The Lord he built himself a stately statue,
Would he exalt it on a pedestal
Made of coarse clods of earth, then let my fate
Be chaos,—brutish let me be and shapeless,
May I but take my part in the support
Of a perfection,—so my formlessness
Shall this way serve the beauty of the universe

If it shall please the Lord to touch me with
His finger and rouse a flaming in my soul,—
So be it Should he wish that I resound
With clarion tones of victory and triumph,—
That I should win me her whom I desire —
So be it Or if he wish that, like a flute,
My soul sob out a lonely serenade
Yearning at doors fast locked, of the one lady,
For ever inaccessible,—so be it

PAUSE

Andromenes

Menessa, truly I said that like blue skies
Above us so serene is my Amilius —
Look on this flower of bloodlike purple now,
Entrancing, fragrant as the piercing clove !
Sempromius, we await the sound of thy
Harsh voice and stabbing wisdom

Sempromius

I will speak
I will refute Amilius Has then God
A use for slaveslings so contemptible ?

[*I stir among the Magi*]

Yes yes, contemptible ! Amilius
Is colour,—he is a clod of earth,—he is
A note or an ethereal vibration
A stone obedient to feet that trample !
But were I God —
I would create around me millions
Of demons disobedient to my will
So that I might rejoice in their wild freedom ,

I would wage war on them, and conquer them,
 And be their sovereign Conquest is so sweet !—
 Obedience wearies me But when a proud
 Fair champion threatens me with brow uplifted,
 Haughtily flings his gauntlet,—when I seize him
 By his thick locks, bend his white neck, and kneel
 On his stout shoulders, crushing his resistance
 To earth, his face in dust,—when I can plant
 My foot on his heart, that beats with wrath and
 curses,—

When I can stare with eyes that godlike laugh
 Into the flaming hatred of his own,—
 Then I can live !—Yes, were I God ! And that
 Is what God is, I tell you this, ye sage
 Poltroons ! And that, I say, is what God is !
 But I—I am not God But let him shatter
 The rebel upsweep of my eagle's wings,—
 Still I rebel Planting my foot of brass
 On mountain steps, Pelion on Ossa piled,
 I shall ascend the ladder of dizzy might
 Until Yah ve—or Zeus—shall fling me down

And love ? Love is but power !—Love, un-
 appeased,
 Is as a spur to strong volition's steed,
 But love appeased becomes our steed unspurred,
 Our champion the White Horse, who then obeys
 The bridle and becomes our living throne —

Enough of words ! Enough ! Now in my breast
 Forces incalculable surge exultant

The sword, the thunder's chariot, mine I crave !
 To fight and win, thus I aspire !
 I yearn for wounds,—to smite Kings to their grave,—
 To leave black embers on my trail of fire !

I crave a crown, the purple—I require
 To change all limits,—mine be for my loins
 A lioness enslaved to my desire !
 Be there no law save what my will enjoins !

Give me the sword, the sword ! Bring weapons,
ho !

Let my hands wield them ! Ah, I yearn to slay !—

I, I will quaff my cup of destined woe—

Kiss ye the sword, salute the sword ! Obey !

[He falls limply on the bench]

Andromenes

Nay, be ye calm, my holy sages all !

Wherefor this stir ? Our good Sempronius

Is overcome He has excess of power

Look—he has fainted—he is ill Go, Teucer,—

Give water to our warrior of day dreams !

[A boy gives Sempronius a goblet of water Sempronius drinks]

Andromenes

Let us continue our debate Come, Rhegius,—

Hide not thyself away beyond yon bush,

But tell us what thy youth now thinks In thee

There breathes the gentle throb of mystery

Which is begotten in the spring But how,

My hapless Rhegius, thou art burning now !

Wise thou shalt not be, strength thy will shall drain

From that source whence thou drinkest thy sweet
bane

*[Rhegius staggers out from the bush halts clasps his hands over
his head, and cries out with a sob in his voice]*

Rhegius

Maness

!

[He runs away]

PAUSE

Andromenes

Much wisdom have ye uttered in debate,

Yet, save for that one cry, nought truly great

SCENE V

[*Andromenes cell It is all in darkness except for a faint light on a desk to the front of the stage on which also are a number of large manuscripts open Silence A vibration of sound like a very high note of a violin*]

First Voice

To-day !

Second Voice

To-day !

First Voice

God's will be done alway

PAUSE

First Voice

We must release him, to our grief

Second Voice

To greet him is our sweet relief

First Voice

Love him ! We loved him as our own

Second Voice

To him the Rose way we have shown

First Voice

The Bridgehead he hath found and won

Second Voice

Beneath the Cross may he march on !

First Voice

We grieve to fill his cup with woes

Second Voice

He wins seers' purple through death's throes

[*A soft but harsh note suggesting a horn The flame goes out and rekindles Sempronius suddenly appears He is all in black There is nothing to be seen but his deathly white face and his hair like Medusa's snakes*]

Sempronius

Omnipotent am I now ! I have subdued
 The Astral ! See these purple lozenges
 Of evil blood-red bristle, shaped like hooks,
 That wave around —and see these yellow spheres,
 Shameless and lustreless that hang in bunches,—
 These pliant black-haired stalks that wreath and
 writhe

Jeering in ominous silence ! And thou there,
 Huge, beast like outline with a cone shaped back
 And squames, so like the comb of a huge cock
 And blood stained ! But thy head thine eyes ?
 Where are they ?

Ye all in shape resemble common things
 And that ? A box, ridiculously rolling
 From side to side ! And this ? A pot, but it
 Has burst its neck with thirst !—Oh my keen gaze,
 Thou piercest the horizon to its depths
 So sharp thy keenness now !—But what art thou ?
 A fiend, confusedly so like a man ?
 Yes thou hast blind white eyes of ivory,
 Yet blind thou art not —me canst thou well see !—
 So tremble, ye droll and awful ! I, the mage,
 Sempronius, stand here, so tremble ye
 Before my lilac pentagram, made of
 The carcase of a noble will !—But hark !—
 Those steps ? Manessa !

*[He sits on a bench half seen on the other side of the fire
 Manessa appears clothed only in a flowing mass of hair
 but save for the outline of her face and long eyes and
 ebony hair nothing is to be seen of her except one white
 shoulder and a semi-transparent arm, which looks blue
 and curls round shoulder.]*

Manessa

Sempronius wilt thou do it ?

Of power,—more than all the dread and terror
 Of my new godhead,—thee do I desire—
 My slave !

Manessa

So be it !

Sempronius

More powerful than the Teacher
 Now am I ! He is mine ! I shall but look
 At him, and he will die , his blood will cease
 To flow before my gaze omnipotent ,—
 Yea, the soft texture of the thinnest threads
 Within his brain, with my consuming lightning
 Will I shrivel !

Manessa

So be it !

Sempronius

Thou holdest me

In awe ?

[Manessa nods and looks at him without averting her gaze]

Sempronius

Vouchsafe to me, then this one pledge,—
 One great assurance Bow thy tressed head
 Before me —let me see Manessa's head
 Bent in obeisance to me ! Bow—bow down !

*[He rises and stretches out his hand in an attitude of command
 Manessa bows low and her hair falls in a stream of black
 in front of her face One minute passes]*

Manessa [rising]

The silence sings The tensile air is strained —
 The very aether breaks neath the strain of waiting

Sempronius

The Master comes now I will hide

Manessa

He comes ?

Sempronius

Yea, for my heart-strings quiver like a dove

Manessa

Thou quailest ?

Sempronius

I will do it !

Manessa

Else he were

A craven, that Sempronius, not a mage !

Sempronius

Sempronius is a god !

[Sempronius vanishes and Andromenes appears at almost the same instant. The light becomes stronger. Manessa is only dimly seen but Andromenes is in full sight. His ornamental costume glitters with gold. His silvery head is beautiful.]

Andromenes

Thus far ! These are the depths ! I only wait
To tread the Bridge Or on wings shall I fly ?
The head, earth wonted, is too apt to reel

Manessa

The hour of birth is come, in anxious dread
I now prepare to cover up mine eyes
Let it be dazzled when the light is born

Andromenes

But, tell me what so strange a bark is sent
For this my voyage ?

Manessa

Thou hast been too happy,—
Too much beloved Taste this cup of pun
For our brief mornen—drink this cup of hate !

Manessa

And in the accents of our own speech

Andromenes

Listen !

THE SONG OF THE SALAMANDERS

Whence thy light,
 Whence thy light,
 God of black and red and white ?
 Fire, blow bright,
 Fire, glow bright,
 Steed of black and red and white
 Crests and wings,
 Crests and wings,
 Who first leapt to eternal things ?
 Overthrown,
 Scorched and prone,
 Is one stablished lightning-throne
 Ne'er may we,
 Ne'er may we
 Peer into profundity
 Nor may we,
 Nor may we
 Heights above us ever see
 Flames around,
 Flames around,
 Life for us thus pent and bound
 Who may mark ?
 None may mark
 Bounds against a gold-red spark
 Thou wilt lie,
 Thou wilt fly
 To the truth, or to a lie ?
 Youth, farewell !
 Brother, farewell,
 There in paradise to dwell ?
 There with God,
 There with God,
 Burn thy body to the sod
 Till thy soul, from dust and ashes,
 Into unknown regions flashes !

Andromenes

But thou, Manessa ?

Manessa

I will bide with him

Andromenes

He hath won might ?

Manessa

He is too much of clay !

Andromenes

But in the body thou desirest him ?

[Manessa shakes her head]

Andromenes

How canst thou then wed him thus willingly ?

Manessa

It must be ! Curious it is , 'tis doomed
A poet made us all and sways us all ,
And yet we are not slaves But He, through us,
Ever a seeker of adventures, yearns
To gain experience of everything

Andromenes

In season did I learn that all of us
Are but the persons set in some strange drama,
Whose author is a phantast *[Looks at the fire]*

Manessa

Full of whims —

PAUSE

Manessa

Oh, be thou blessed ! Mayest thou live well,—
Live in the light !

Andromenes

And death itself is noble
The embarkation makes the heart o'erbrim
With bold and anxious curiosity

PAUSE

But I shall come back here

Manessa

No, no ! Thou wilt
There see so much of precious things that thou
Will straight forget this corner of the world,
This weft of fire and chaff

Andromenes

No, for I feel
I shall return I love ! I shall not linger
No, no I shall return to thee, Manessa

Manessa [in a melancholy voice]

Thou wilt forget, or, thou wilt recollect
For one short moment only, when I knock
So softly, shyly, at the golden gate,
Wearing the poor remains of astral flesh,
A beggar, humble Fresh from revelry
Upon thy throne with kings surrounded, thou
Wilt glance down, see me rise forthwith, put forth
Thy hand and say ' My sister-soul, wife soul,
Come sit upon the knees of my affection

[Pause both peering into the fire]

Andromenes

No no I shall come back to thee in the flesh

[*Sempronius emerges from the shadow*]

Sempronius

That I may kill thee yet again ? Oh, hate !

Andromenes

Sempronius ?—It is curious,—thy face
Is terrible and beautiful, with a low,
Unfathomably low, black beauty
What power is it hath thus transfigured thee ?

Sempronius

What power ? That I will tell ! A fearful thing—
In human speech there is no word more frightful

Andromenes

What is this word ?

Sempronius

Envy !

[Groans are heard from every side Manessa covers her face with
her hands]

Andromenes

Green-yellow viperous beast ! And yet, perhaps
Art thou the pledge of some equality
Yet undiscovered So thy bitter venom
I love, oh Envy, thou the democrat !

Sempronius

Yea thou art great and good ! Yet Holy Father,
Mightier now am I than thou art See
Thy gaze now falters now thou canst not lift
Thine eyes from mine ! Now in thine eyes, starts

SCENE VI

[*In the Monastery of the Sacred Thorns on the Isle of Trezos
Abbot Dorotheus, Hierodoulos and the young monk
Theognostos sitting by the porch of the sombre basilica*]

Dorotheus

I have attained great age, which now bedims
My mind, and soon will numb my heart as well
The snow already lies heaped upon my head
'Tis winter, winter now ! We seemed in summer
Nearer the sun, for while the sunshine glowed
Our thoughts sought God — A zealot have I been,
My brethren now tranquility—the herald
Of peaceful death—hath chilled my blood, enswathing
My mind as with a mist My grave ward way
I softly go, sure of my certain path
I trail my shattered frame up to the gates
Sepulchral, and knock there with trustful hand
A friendly porter shall ope wide those gates,
And I shall step across the threshold, and
Become a child—springtime returned, transformed,—
And with my childlike eyes shall see God's face

Hierodoulos

By many years I am thy elder, Father,
Yet I for sixteen years in filial wise
Have been obedient to thy Master's staff
So deign, this evening hour that I, the pupil,
Need not conceal my doubting from my teacher
Hear me, most reverend Father Dorotheus
Is it then wise to trust that thou for sure
Hast found the Path and gained thy crown in Heaven ?
Is this not pride ? Till thou hast after death
Received the kisses of the Seraphim,
Thou dardest not say thou has laid up possessions
For thine own self imperishably safe
As our possessions perishable may
Be reaved from us by ill-chance or sly thief,
So from the grey-haired pilgrim may be snatched
His unprotected burden of good fame
The road by evil demons is infested,

Who lurk e'en at the tall sepulchral gates,
 So every moment must we be on guard,
 Be humble and afflict ourselves, and, trembling,
 Glance every way about and cross ourselves,—
 Until the sentry's password brings us home

Theognostos [looking out over the sea]

The waters wore a golden flush, now gleams
 The sun upon the margins of the sea,
 And glistens with his diadem of beams,—
 Smiling a smile of sanctity

Hushed, ocean's golden mantle softly glides,—
 Hushed, splashes on the rocks his pearly brim,
 In chasuble of starry black, Night hudes
 Eastward beyond the circling rim

The stillness speaks in notes of prayer, and now
 The summons of the vesper bell peals out
 Unbid, me-seems, to God the billows bow,—
 And that his saints are less devout

[The evening bell tolls]

Ere one tremulous note can end
 Soareth it,
 Till another, as a panting friend,
 Followeth it
 There the first fades above the skies,
 One with it
 While the bell, for each that dies,
 Golden booming re maketh it
 Melody wafts mystery—
 Sleep in it !
 Sleep's own mystery—
 Soothing it
 Thrones we see—
 Royalty !
 Our souls faint perceiving it !
 This is He,
 Graciously,
 When we pray, receiveth it

PAUSE

Dorotheus

Where is my crutch ? Thy hand, Theognostos !
 We will now go —Or, hold,—let me now pray
 Here 'neath the sunset sky's brocaded splendour

[He stops and prays The monks who are filing into the chapel also stop]

Dorotheus

Pour down, sweetest heart of Jesu, son of God,
 Into our bodies' humble vessels peace serene,
 Scatter the tumult of our passion and our pride,
 Like a cloud of white, wash our souls clean !
 Let our prayers, like wreathing incense, climb
 In pure white glistening cloudlets where He trod,—
 He who is God's Son
 Let, in truth, His earth become Thy church sublime,
 Leading us by all ways up to God
 God our Father !

[The bell peals]

[Prasius comes up from the shore and falls at Dorotheus' feet]

Dorotheus

Who'rt thou, my son ?

Prasius

Prasius, mage, from Pharès

[A stir among the monks]

Dorotheus

Can it be ? A disciple thou of him,
 The great Andromenes, so wise, so strange,
 Who turned from Christ's true path into the forest's
 Darkness ? Thou knowest well ye are forbidden
 To journey here, we each to each are strangers

Prasius

Whilst yet the lustrous star of Archimago
 Andromenes shone wondrous o'er Pharès,—
 E'en then—my soul perplexed, my heart confused—

I felt that I had erred from the straight path
 But now, Father, but now have mine eyes seen
 Whither those gilded steps, rich-carpeted,
 Had led In our ascent we had attained
 The summit of a cliff Tarpeian, whence
 With horror insensate we gazed into
 A yawning precipice beneath our feet
 Look, Father, in mine eyes,—canst thou yet see
 The frozen terror there ? For thou alone,
 May be, hast skill to heal my poisoned soul

Dorotheus

What, then, hath happened there ?

Prasitus

Oh, hear me, Father !
 Lemons and roses and olives abound—
 Gardens of colour in gay device—
 Where a vast palace, golden crowned,
 Stands in an earthly paradise
 Lovely the galleries, lofty the halls,
 Mages conversed there low and long,
 Gentle beasts lived within its walls,—
 Statues and pictures lays and sweet song
 E'en as the planets, in motley hued choir,
 Range round the sun and bathe in his rays,
 Thus our wise brethren did he inspire,—
 Master they loved him and rendered him praise
 And our mild Teacher spake to us ' Be
 Each of you, Brethren, himself, and be true,
 Each of you conquer his own apogee,—
 Each for himself I love all of you '
 Roads of black magic to us he revealed,
 Impious sceptres and might born of ill
 ' Himself let each be, his will let each wield '
 Fearful that saving—his voice was so still
 Tempted by wizardry, one brother brought
 Power Satanic to his conquering
 Yet it was he who was craftily caught,—
 Despot and slave to the Locust's dark wing
 Hark, brethren, hearken !
 And him he slew

But the golden thread
 Hath his steel hewn through !
 O'er the gardens, like a winding sheet, the clouds
 now fold ,
 All the fragrant flowers are withered in the leaf ,
 And in years all living there have aged twice as old ,—
 Eyes are filled with fear, mouths stopped with grief
 Music is changed to mourning, and wisdom hath no
 tongue ,
 E'en the sages are become as lowly thralls ,
 All who linger, by shafts of purple death are stung ,
 Ghouls now walk those galleries and halls
 He, with scourge in place of sceptre, on the throne
 Sits in hellish majesty bedight,—
 Ceaseless wild with rancour, low his groan,—
 He who slew the Son of Light
 Magi, Magi how are ye cast down
 From the cliff of pride to deepest pain !
 This is your rash aspiration's crown !—
 Nature's secrets yield you thus your gain !—
 Father Father, let me touch thee ! Make—
 Make me miraculously to forget !
 From my dreadful dream let me awake,
 Once again to God obedient
 God is One, is bright, is calm, eternal,
 Reason I renounce, and passion, too !
 Out with arrogance and thoughts supernal !
 Out with sport of vileness and hell's brew !—
 Oh, through humble prayer to wrest me free,
 And to conquer self by holy fast,—
 Pass away, then, self-forgetfully,
 At the Cross, Hope's anchorage at last !

[*He kneels to Dorotheus*]

Dorotheus

As from afar, as from a foreign shore,
 I listen to this bitter story Strange
 It is for me to hear this tale of strife
 I live in blissful death, and my heart fails ,
 But in it yet remains one drop of balm—
 A father's simple kindness Do thy penance

Here, poor brother, shed thy tears and pray
 While we are singing at the shrine If then
 Thy heart is filled with sweetness, soothed, appeased,—
 Enter our fane as though it were thy home

[*The monks go into the church in pairs, the young monk
 Theognostos alone remaining behind He leans over the
 balustrade and gazes longingly over the smooth expanse
 of sea*]

Theognostos

Swift to the south the darkness grows,
 Azure the moon has risen to reign
 Sweet enchantment, spice born, blows,
Stillness speaks in languid strain
 God, oh God,—why dost thou attire
 Earth in vestments so marvellous?
 Or dost thou, Lord, dost thou desire
 Us and all men idolatrous?
 Life being hell, why such array,
 Lure of colour,—in hell which is earth?
 Why so clearly doth all earth play
 Such harmonious notes of mirth?
 Hark, the psalm begins to swell!
 Golden prison, I go! Farewell!
 Under that sombre roof mind springs
 Up to higher imaginings
 Purer than stars Thy candle-shine
 Where Thy house is, on Thy shrine
 World of the eyes, here God doth not dwell
 World of my sight, this is not God's house
 World that I see, a gilded hell
 Whited sepulchre, Sodom's carouse

But the golden thread
 Hath his steel hewn through !
 O'er the gardens, like a winding sheet, the clouds
 now fold ,
 All the fragrant flowers are withered in the leaf ,
 And in years all living there have agèd twice as old ,—
 Eyes are filled with fear, mouths stopped with grief
 Music is changed to mourning, and wisdom hath no
 tongue ,
 E'en the sages are become as lowly thralls ,
 All who linger, by shafts of purple death are stung ,
 Ghouls now walk those galleries and halls
 He, with scourge in place of sceptre, on the throne
 Sits in hellish majesty bedight,—
 Ceaseless wild with rancour, low his groan,—
 He who slew the Son of Light

Magi, Magi, how are ye cast down
 From the clift of pride to deepest pain !
 This is your rash aspiration's crown !—
 Nature's secrets yield you thus your gain !—
 Father, Father, let me touch thee ! Make—
 Make me miraculously to forget !
 From my dreadful dream let me awake,
 Once again to God obedient
 God is One, is bright, is calm, eternal,
 Reason I renounce, and passion, too !
 Out with arrogance and thoughts supernal !
 Out with sport of vileness and hell's brew !—
 Oh, through humble prayer to wrest me free,
 And to conquer self by holy fast,—
 Pass away, then, self forgetfully,
 At the Cross, Hope's anchorage, at last !

[*He turns to Dorotheus*]

Dorotheus

As from afar, as from a foreign shore,
 I listen to this bitter story Strange
 It is for me to hear this tale of strife
 I live in blissful death, and my heart fails .
 But in it yet remains one drop of balm—
 A father's simple kindness Do thy penance

Here, poor brother; shed thy tears and pray
 While we are singing at the shrine If then
 Thy heart is filled with sweetness, soothed, appeased,—
 Enter our fane as though it were thy home

[*The monks go into the church in pairs, the young monk Theognostos, alone remaining behind He leans over the balustrade and gazes longingly over the smooth expanse of sea*]

Theognostos

Swift to the south the darkness grows,
 Azure the moon has risen to reign
 Sweet enchantment, spice-born, blows,
 Stillness speaks in languid strain
 God, oh God,—why dost thou attire
 Earth in vestments so marvellous?
 Or dost thou, Lord, dost thou desire
 Us and all men idolatrous?
 Life being hell, why such array,
 Lure of colour,—in hell which is earth?
 Why so clearly doth all earth play
 Such harmonious notes of mirth?

Hark, the psalm begins to swell!

Golden prison, I go! Farewell!

Under that sombre roof mind springs
 Up to higher imaginings
 Purer than stars Thy candles shine
 Where Thy house is, on Thy shrine
 World of the eyes, here God doth not dwell
 World of my sight, this is not God's house
 World that I see, a gilded hell,
 Whited sepulchre, Sodom's carouse

[*He goes into the church*]

Prasius

The monk is right, is right
 World of our eyesight—there God doth not dwell,
 World of our vision—a specious hell
 And the cosmic world is not God's house,
 Is a false bedizened Sodom's carouse

Weep, Prasius! How hast thou been led astray
 By that vague God of him, the king of follies,

But the golden thread
 Hath his steel hewn through !
 O'er the gardens, like a winding sheet, the clouds
 now fold ,
 All the fragrant flowers are withered in the leaf ,
 And in years all living there have aged twice as old ,—
 Eyes are filled with fear, mouths stopped with grief
 Music is changed to mourning, and wisdom hath no
 tongue ,
 E'en the sages are become as lowly thralls ,
 All who linger, by shafts of purple death are stung ,
 Ghouls now walk those galleries and halls
 He, with scourge in place of sceptre, on the throne
 Sits in hellish majesty bedight,—
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 From the cliff of pride to deepest pain !
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 Nature's secrets yield you thus your gain !—
 Father, Father, let me touch thee ! Make—
 Make me miraculously to forget !
 From my dreadful dream let me awake,
 Once again to God obedient
 God is One, is bright, is calm, eternal,
 Reason I renounce, and passion, too !
 Out with arrogance and thoughts supernal !
 Out with sport of vileness and hell's brew !—
 Oh, through humble prayer to wrest me free,
 And to conquer self by holy fast,—
 Pass away, then, self-forgetfully,
 At the Cross, Hope's anchorage, at last !

[*He kneels to Dorotheus*]

Dorotheus

As from afar, as from a foreign shore,
 I listen to this bitter story Strange
 It is for me to hear this tale of strife
 I live in blissful death, and my heart fails ,
 But in it yet remains one drop of balm—
 A father's simple kindness Do thy penance

Here poor brother, shed thy tears and pray
While we are singing at the shrine If then
Thy heart is filled with sweetness soothed appeased —
Enter our fane as though it were thy home

*[The monks go into the church as pairs the young monk
Throgostes alone remaining behind He leans over the
balustrade and gazes longingly on the smooth expanse
of sea]*

Unhappy Archimage Andromenes !
 But, blessed Dorotheus, thou hast promised
 A sweet appeasement shall soon touch my heart
 Oh Christ, oh Christ, vouchsafe me speedy peace !
 See Christ, I sorely tribulate myself !
 See, how I weep now, with hot-burning tears !—
 Was I not always Thine ? E'en there, among
 The Magi oft Andromenes himself
 As a white brother has accounted me
 A stranger they all deemed me, oft consigned me
 Hither to Trezos with their gentle gibes —
 Oh, sacred Home of holy wondrous Thorns
 For thy dear ruby wreath of precious blood
 I will exchange my mage's crystal chaplet,
 And give as dower all things,—all earthly things !
 Wherefore I pray and sob

*[The noon shines ever brighter Suddenly there appears
 close by Prasius a white winged figure vaguely outlined]*

The Angel

Prasius

Prasius

Who calleth me ?

Angel

Prasius Prasius

To thee this hour shall God himself in glory come !
 Thou, son of earth shalt see God Thou
 Henceforth all doubts of thine must leave behind
 See, his companions light their signals now

Prasius

Those signals ?—Visitations of the fiends !

The Angel

Stay—see ! Enchained art thou to the vision !

Prasius

Goat hooved men—and horns black !—
 Cat like eyes lust satisfied !
 Hairy trunks pig demonic —

Red maws jeering, open wide .
These are the fiends !

Angel

No one knows.
Thou must see

Prasius

Worse now ! Flickering flashes twirl
From the moon, bewitched and dumb,—
Faces peer out, a hairy whirl,—
Bosoms and shoulders I see come,—
Silvery feet are dancing there,—
Mouths voluptuous grin and sneer,—
Shameless eyes accosting glare,—
Bowls held in oblation here,
Filled with bunches of sweet grapes !
Garlanded with leaf and twig
Hot hell's bratlings jig strange shapes,
Sing and beckon beckon and jig .

Oh, our hearts, Lord God, now save
From the Evil One !

Angel

He in glory will
Reveal to thee his face !

Piasius

Chains dragging,—
Flesh burning,—
Bewitched and flagging,—
In woe and yearning —
I kneel here low to thee,
Oh Spirit unknown to me !
Ocean shrinks to narrow streams,—
Dun and wan the world sunbeams,—
Pulse of life a piteous wavering —
Chants of faith confused quavering !
Into my soul two diamonds fall
And it flames ecstasical

Thy countenance ! Let me but gaze my fill of
thy face,—
Of thy radiant locks that have made me distraught !
Thy smile is the dawn that to Earth first was brought
Thy countenance ! Let me but gaze my fill of thy
face !

No, thou shalt not depart, thou shalt open thy
lips !
To me shalt thou utter some wondrous new thought,
I will listen again and again undistraught
No, thou shalt not depart, thou shalt open thy lips !

Thou art God and, I trow it for truth, God of
mine !
To thee will I sing will I chant in my joy !
Dionysus, prevail ! Hallelujah ! Evoe !
Thou art God and, I trow it for truth, God of mine !

Dionysus

I dance ! My dance, the dance of world-creation
I suffer, think and love in every kind

I am inertia and life's exaltation
 Myself I seek my self, in dreams my self I find !
 Sometimes I lay me down to rest, then ye
 All plunge into repose , and, thus begun
 Stones, worms and magi, none is but may see
 That all the world is one the world is one !

[The vision disappears]

[Prasius lies motionless A monk comes out of the church.]

Monk

What is it, brother ?
 Where is the former Mage ?
 He lies there ! Is he faint, or sleeping ?

[He kneels by Prasius]

He is dead He is dead !

CURTAIN

Oh, our hearts, Lord God, now save
From the Evil One!

Angel

He in glory will
Reveal to thee his face!

Prasius

Chains dragging,—
Flesh burning,—
Bewitched and flagging,—
In woe and yearning,—
I kneel here low to thee,
Oh Spirit unknown to me!
Ocean shrinks to narrow streams,—
Dun and wan the world-sunbeams,—
Pulse of life a piteous wavering,—
Chants of faith confused quavering!
Into my soul two diamonds fall,
And it flames ecstasical.

Sempronius

What ?

Rek

I once was young

Sempronius

What else ?

Rek

I was even hungrier than now

Sempronius [laughs]

And what ere that ?

Rek

And I was once a child . . .

Sempronius

Aught else ?

Rek

And was often beaten hard

Sempronius

Ere that ?

Rek

Ere that . . . nothing

Sempronius

Gaze into my eyes,—

Recall what 'twas befell before thy chuidhood

No ? I command thee to remember !

Rek

It pains me

Sempronius

Oh, pain ! To that thou art well schooled Remember !

Rek

It hurts me, it is hard . . .

SCENE VII

[An intolerable morning on the Isle of Phaes Wind and rain Bushes blown in wild disorder On the right a deformed statue dripping Sempromus enters wrapped in a broad yellow cape a hood over his head]

Sempromus

Yes, yes! Me likes it thus! A lightning flash?
 I would that everywhere all nature could
 Be drenched and quiver thus I would gladly turn
 The world into a swamp, for I am in
 A swamp of mildew and corruption Low—
 Low am I fallen That was my wish Yes, once
 I envied only Andromenes, but now,
 Though all are servile to me here, I envy
 Not mage alone, but all of human form,—
 And birds and deer and bees I envy now,—
 The flowers and the elements These mock me,
 Me who am fallen lowest and my torment
 Is my sustaining strength Solace is mine
 Only when something falls down prone before me
 Brothers I find none, save the basest born
 Of Astral spirits And I love conversing
 With shaggy Rek

[He blows a whistle]

Come hither, cur! I call!
 Hither, thou stinking ape man!

[Rek runs up to him all damp looking like a gorilla He has a string of bells on his neck]

Shrink not! I will not beat thee For I scourge
 Those only who are above me Thee will I
 Caress *[He fondles him]*

Yes, thus Do thou now lick my hands!
 Yes thus, Thou surly beast, canst thou
 remember

Aught of thy past? Canst thou remember, Rek?

Rek

I do remember

Sempronius

What ?

Rek

I once was young .

Sempronius

What else ?

Rek

I was even hungrier than now

Sempronius [laughs]

And what ere that ?

Rek

And I was once a child .

Sempronius

Aught else ?

Rek

And was often beaten hard

Sempronius

Ere that ?

Rek

Ere that . . . nothing

Sempronius

Gaze into my eyes —

Recall what 'twas befell before thy childhood

No ? I command thee to remember !

Rek

It pains me

Sempronius

Oh, pain ! To that thou art well schooled Remember !

Rek

It hurts me, it is hard . . .

Sempronius

Someone—somewhere—somewhen ?
Say, wert thou once

Rek

I—I have been

Sempronius

So, tell thy tale !

Rek

[*He stands erect His face unexpectedly changes and brightens*]

How light hearted am I ! How clear of mind !

My brother is by me, so handsome, so kind

We are both youths we walk and embrace,

And nature smiles on us with vernal grace

What happiness ! What happiness !

But whom do I see ?—Oh, gentlest maid !

I fell in love—which none may evade,—

I remember the twilight,—dark foreshadowing

But sweet are the fetters that cause such torturing !

What happiness ! What happiness !

No none shall evade it ! She is so beauteous

But we, we are two, and love is perilous !

And he too, gazes and she derides

And in the starlight my brother ludes

What misery ! What misery !

Now ye have kissed now ye have smiled

Why are ye hidden ? Who is beguiled ?

Oh fearful the moment I hear dull and dim

'Thou art his better and higher than him'

What misery ! What misery !

Ah, what pierces my heart and scorches me now ?

And whose wings brush yellow over my brow ?

'Tis Envy, the Crow that clouds my brains,

She hisses and hisps and seethes in my veins

Oh, how degrading ! Oh, how degrading !

I raised my hand and fiercely struck him down !

Him with myself I slew at this fell blow

I sheared the thread of life He flies aloft,

But I

[*Sempronius rises*]

What, is this I ? This am I ?
Am I here ?
Is this Rek I ? This am I ?
I have forgotten ! Yes, I have forgotten
Yet stay, nor be quenched,
Thou soft green glimmer !
Be thou not dimmed, oh Hope !
In the dull light
Of this green spark,
Steps leading upward
Oh Hope, be not quenched !

Sempronius

A curse on thee ! Thou dar'st to hope ? Bring my
scourge !

[Rek howls and runs away]

Sempronius

More beauty in an ape's past than in mine,—
Sempronius' !—This ape hath hope, but I
Have none—Manessa, now from thee must come
The further reckoning of my martyrdom

[He goes out]

[*Manessa's studio It has a glass roof Big panneaux on the wall recalling suprematist paintings, their backgrounds in strangely harmonious bright colours in streaks and lines startling but correlated Manessa is wearing a smock her arms are bare her hair is tied with a red ribbon She is painting*

Sempronius enters in his damp yellow cloak He flings it on the bench glances at Manessa's work shrugs his shoulders, and walks away slowly with his head bowed]

Manessa

Give me some sun, Sempronius,—just a little !

Sempronius

No, not a gleam ! Let the rain patter on !
Thou hearest it ?—ta—ta—ta ? Be it always so —
Always until the ages cease,—ta—ta—ta—ta !

Manessa

Thy will be done

Sempronius

I will thee weariness !

[*He laughs harshly and goes out]*

[*Manessa goes on working in silence Enter Rhegius He stands still silent at the door and looks sideways at her]*

Manessa [looking round]

What, thou here, Rhegius ? Now, no silliness !
Else thou must go

Rhegius

Calm am I, turned to stone
I will sit here and hold discourse on art

Manessa

That will be well What sayst thou of my paintings ?

Rhegius

Hesper is drawing portraits like these, Persius
Designs a god,—and Lentulus strange flowers

Commodus, violating all proportions,
 Is reconstructing everything by some
 New law of logic quite beyond my ken
 And thou to me art unintelligible
 Or is this but a careless parody
 Of those who make designs for Persian carpets ?

Manessa

There is a secret meaning in my pictures
 Music I love, and yet it seems to me
 Always, to the eye, the unheard melodies
 Sing sweeter than those heard

Rhegus

Manessa, please,

If I be not too dull for thee explain,—
 Help me !

Manessa

Look, then, at this deep rosy square,
 So sated,—see, it speaks so youthfully
 Of morning bliss yet here soon interrupted
 By this fresh parable of crimson lake,—
 Like a viola, is it not ? Then, between them,
 But coarser, harder, look upon this riot
 Of love and brotherhood and play of light
 Ah, now !—and here, in a severer colour,
 I will implant a broader bluish stream
 These are the youths, and this reflects ripe wisdom
 Saint Anne is this blue tone—What are these lines ?—
 They, like a voiceless echo, jangle Severed,
 Strangers, they seem, they are in truth connected,
 But without order I shall add new figures
 Of merry hues,—enrich my furrowed field
 Of lines, in medley or in sport,—just as
 My soul inspires Truly, I know not what
 I am creating, but my hand fails not
 Compliantly to paint upon the canvas
 Visions of radiant soul-light as they arise

Rhegus [dropping on his knees]

I try to obey—obey I can no longer

Yea, thou art right, art right, thou sweet enchantress !
 The silent notes are stronger than heard music
 And, sweet as is thy speech, in louder tones
 Thy wondrous countenance rings out to me

Manessa

Enough of that ! Thy demon hath awakened
 Now go !

Rhegus

Oh, dost thou hate me ! Wilt thou never
 Suffer me once to touch thy raiment's hem ?
 Dost thou remember not the hymn they sang ?
 They are the seekers, thou the radiance,—
 may
 They touch the hem of beauty's raiment,
 they
 Are satisfied

Only the hem, Manessa —and thy fire
 Of bliss flows through my veins a mighty torrent,
 As once were all the grievous ailments healed
 Of those who touched the hem of Jesus' raiment

Manessa

I often pity thee Nay, move not thence—
 But close thine eyes for one kiss on thy brow

[*Kisses his forehead Sen-pronius enters*]

Senpronius

Ah, splendid ! This—this I had not expected !
 This—is a boon ! The Queen of all the Magi
 Makes me a cuckold for a hunchback dwarf !
 This is the first time now for many weeks
 My heart exults and calmly can prepare
 Revenge ! I rub my hands ! I rub my hands !

Manessa

I hope thou wilt not now degrade thy might
 To hangman's work

Sempronius

No, no, I swear to thee,
My beautiful Manessa, I'll not touch him,—
Not even with a finger-tip nor do
His body any hurt — What, negroes, ho !

[*Two negroes enter*]

Bind me this hunchback here between these pillars !

Manessa

What would'st thou do ?

Sempronius

I would but fondle thee !

[*The negroes bind Rhegus between the pillars*]

Sempronius

Still might he shut his eyes,—well, let him so !
But see that both his hands are safely tied
So that he cannot cover his ears with them —
Even so ! Begone !

[*The negroes go*]

Oh, marvellous Manessa,
How opportune this bench is, draped in purple !
It will serve well ! 'Tis long since I last kissed thee
Upon thy honeyed lips,—long since I played
With thy soft, wave like tresses, and permitted
My thirsting hands their feast of satin smoothness
On thy nude body Come hither !

Manessa

Oh, take heed !

Canst thou not see deep down in Rhegus' heart
Thou rackest there against thyself a titan
Who e'en now waxeth tall, a towering flame ?
Sempronius, take heed !

Sempronius

Well, what if his envy
Do flame so that it make mine blanch a little ?
Rhegius, learn Envy !—Why now hesitate,
My sweet Manessa ? Thou knowest well thou must
Obey my word

Manessa

Whilst thou art conqueror

[*She touches the buckle of her smock, which falls to her feet, showing her graceful body through its single garment. She shakes her head, and her hair tumbles down in a thick black mass. Sempronius stretches out his arms to her with a cruel, sensual smile. She goes towards him. Rhegius utters a groan of terror. Sempronius laughs. On Manessa's lips there plays a strange smile, like that of the Gioconda of Leonardo.*]

SCENE IX

[*In other spheres In the limitless void two ladders crowned
with two thrones one bright red with a crimson base the
other sky blue with an ultramarine base The White Angel
Gudulah on the red throne On the blue throne the Steel
Angel Gaburah*

*The Genius of Andromenes flying on huge golden wings
between cliffs He alights*]

The Genius of Andromenes

To Earth! To Earth!

My heart will I soon appease,
I will clasp my star of green!
I will sate me again at my ease
With my mountains and my seas
Ah, into three fold boundaries
To re enter, renewed and serene!
To Earth! To Earth!

White Angel

Bide yet awhile, thou fitting spirit!
Whither dost aim thy golden flight?
Not oft is it that souls are willing
Souls like thine, to fly beneath
Wherefore cage now and imperil
Thy spirit in mask of clay anew?
Aloft there love is all resplendent,
There—none is shall bar thy way
There to thy touch are rose red bosoms,—
Kiss and caress vouchsafed of God—
For selfhood life eternal given,—
For boundaries, the limitless

Nor seeing the beauty that is in themselves
 The woodcutter returns to his poor home,
 Scolds at the warping door-posts of his house,
 Cursing his hovel Oh, poor brother mine,—
 He see, nought there but acrid poverty
 But I—I cannot tear mine eyes away
 From this entrancing hut so great my emotion,—
 Seeing the evening sun illumine the windows,
 Kiss them, like eyes, with distant reverence,
 Hearing trees rustle obeisant to that place
 Whereon God's poor have trod and worn a path
 Thus—thus are we of earth Suffering always,
 Striving and loving Long have I known this,
 And at the Cross could not learn deeper wisdom
 The precipice
 Above and below,—
 Endless the rainbow I unite
 The black abyss,
 The mountain glow,—
 I in myself am my work and delight
 I love Earth best of all Thou art, green Earth of mine,
 The jewel on the zone of Venus the Divine !
 Thine let me be ! I am earth's patriot !
 To Earth ! To Earth !

[He tries to fly on]

Steel Angel

Halt thou, halt ! The threshold of triple space
 I guard, stern sentry of justice Hear me, then !
 Fly,—follow thy behest,—bring consolation,
 But to transgress the law of justice—that
 I will not suffer thee to meditate
 Go forward, then Forgive in thine own justice,
 Yet know, a higher court awaits them here
 The tyrant, sotted of iniquities,
 With his own lips must quaff the bitter lees
 Thou hear'st ? Though penance cleanseth all from sin,
 Sin-stained across this threshold none may in

White Angel

He is good

Steel Angel

He is good ,
But fullest powers he must not wield

White Angel

Thou, within time, art right

Steel Angel

Outside time, thou art right

White Angel

I honour thy dread award

Steel Angel

Thy love I adore

Both [to Andromenes]

Fly on !

[Andromenes, with exclamations of joy like a lark's song, flies downward The angels smile at each other with affectionate understanding]

Sempronius

Sweet is the sleep thou bringest me

[*The curtain is again lifted and Manessa appears. She sees the boy she shivers fixes her gaze on him and retreats a step*]

Manessa

Art thou —— ?

Sempronius

Thou knowest him ?

Manessa

He is kin to me

Sempronius

Ah ? Kin ? How failed I to discern at once
His likeness to thee—both in looks and ways ?
So ? More alarms ?—But I want no alarms !
Sleep do I want So strange it seems to me
That I can sleep Agam—let the boy sing !

[*He lies down*]

Boy [sings low]

The sister all night stood wide awake
At the window the long night through
She had waited and waited for day to break—
The promise come true—
But at dawn she tired and slumbered Sleep now
The matin breeze lulls thee to bliss
The brother through glamour and dreams—keeps
his vow—
Creeps home,—claims his kiss

Manessa [whispers]

Andromenes ? Thou !

Andromenes

Hush ! Peace ! See—my beloved assassin sleeps

[*Sempronius and the old woman are sleeping. But Manessa and the Genius of Andromenes smile at each other with the smile of the angels who guard the threshold of space*]

SCENE XI

[*The sun is again shining on Phares, the flowers blooming
The bench with the marble pillars to the left — Andromenes
sitting on the steps*]

Andromenes

Things dying, downward, living, upward strive
The flowers, fighting, conquering gravity,
Push up, unfold their splendour and set free
Their souls—their sweet blind souls that breezes
drive—

Merging in search of lovers to contrive
Immortal flowering, in whose arms the bee
'Lights, sips, drinks deep, serving mysteriously
At once the flowers' Eternity and the hive
Do ye strive upward, too! The flowers' fragrance
Your soul is, make the wisdom of the bee
Yours too, drink deep, while summer breezes
dance

Shed forth your souls in lovers' radiance,
Win mead for all, and in the mystery
Of service, serve—and win—Eternity

[*Manessa comes up to him, decked out with flowers*]

Manessa

Hail, Genius Andromenes! Must I wait
For death to come, or with thy shining body
Wilt thou now clasp this seared and tattered raiment
Wherein my wingéd spirit is enmeshed?

Andromenes

The flesh I donned in flight miraculous
Thine will soon be transfigured Glad were I
To be a man immortal, seeing thee
Immortal too Here, scarce may we do right
In mystic twofold righteousness We both,
In the world-memory living, shall live on
Accountably, there, thou shalt smile for ever
On me, and I shall be insatiable

Manessa

Thy golden fullness, gentle Genius,
 Will cleave my soul, which strains against its flesh
 O'erburthened I am shamed to stand unmoved
 Before thee Yet, some day when I shall stand,
 Spectator of the invisible, perchance
 I shall be more ashamed—then, when I first
 Essay to circle in the dance of freedom
 Yet thus my soul demands, and thou wilt grant

Andromenes

Manessa, dance ! I will make thee
 A snake by magic minstrelsy
 Thou hast o'ercome the flesh's weight,
 Be the idea, the Determinate,
 With a bird's lightness, a snake's elegance,
 Be, like me, a spirit, a genius,—dance !

[*Manessa dances slowly strangely ethereal*]

Andromenes [sings]

In the primal Dark inert lies the Clay
 Down to the depths, with Light, flies Form,
 The abyss then brightens in the fitful ray,—
 A confused pullulation sets creation a-swarm
 In chaos and mist and indolence
 The holy impulse will commence
 Of themselves the Forms at heat, beget Weight,—
 And beauty then gleams in the heavens sublime,
 And dances melodic arise to elate
 The heart which in rhythm begins to beat time
 In rugged, risible turbulence
 Young impulse gallops thence
 It meets the Idea, and perfection matures,
 Then like mirth of gods is the Life song here—
 Thy motion of arms and of head assures
 That one, erstwhile fettered, hath free career
 Magical is the dancer's sense
 Of the Holy Impulse in eminence

Manessa

Thou see'st,—now I am tired

Andromenes

Yet soon will I
Remake thee such that never shalt thou weary
For this time, now, take respite in a kiss

[*Manessa sits beside him They kiss each other The white dove
of Andromenes circles over him and alights on his shoulder*]

Rek [aside]

They kiss each other—vaguely I recall it
They kiss each other—thus will turn to woe
I must run to the master,—rouse him rouse him

[*He runs off*]

Manessa

Thou hast returned, 'tis even as thou didst say

Andromenes

Perhaps 'twas only for thy sake I came
But the Steel Angel makes his scales to clang—
Now dance again,—or if not smile on me

Manessa

With thee, I too am growing young again

Andromenes

Soon younger shalt thou be than birth itself

Manessa

Ah, then, not wise but foolish would I be,
As a butterfly

Andromenes

Is not a butterfly

A sage who, in bewilderment, from Wisdom
Rises to Mind—to earth's best life? For men
Too scant of Mind oft lose all Wisdom too,
And but by mightiest toil of Mind can win
Their Wisdom immemorial back to them—

Thou seest, I still have Mind But much more wise
Than I am is each babbling rivulet,
And wiser than my words—my kiss

Manessa

May that

Be kept for ever so !

Andromenes

Pan keeps all things
"Lose thou not aught," once he was told, to which
He answered "There's no where it can be lost
Gladly would I give to my silent neighbour,—
Fling to the void—My neighbour is myself,—
And full of me the void "

Manessa

And this—are we ?

Andromenes

We are

Manessa

Ah, then, what bliss !

Andromenes

Speak not of bliss, it is a shallow word

[*Manessa hears something*]

Andromenes

Some evil man approaches stealthily

Manessa

Drive him swift hence !

Andromenes

Hast thou ne'er heard that God
And Devil are kin, that high and low are one ?

Manessa

Wilt thou not drive him hence ?

Andromenes

True victory

I will strive after Didst thou say, Manessa,
 That life to thee were bliss ? No, that were shallow !
 For am I happy here ? How should I be
 When I am suffering, ill, flesh mortified ?
 Can I have bliss and my heart leprosed ?
 I love Sempronius with the love of men
 For their soul's body While he bides in gloom
 The sun in my own skies is draped in mist,
 While he is racked, my brow is pricked with thorns,
 While he is vicious, dumb is all my virtue,
 A wailing at my feast affrights my guests,
 And o'er my banquet a wan wraith presides
 And thou, my jewel, if e'er I thought that thou
 Couldst heal my dear assassin-brother, we
 Should part upon a jest—aye, we should part—
 And I would give thee to him

Rek [aside to Sempronius]

Yes, I saw

Them kissing here

Sempronius [aside]

A demon he may be,
 But this my spear is charmed to pierce the flesh
 Of demons and to maim a devil's heart

Manessa

But he will not repent

Andromenes

No road, Manessa,
 Is endless, all the waters reach the ocean

Manessa

But his are stagnant,—like a slough accurst

Andromenes

Canst thou then hate him ?

Manessa

Yes

Andromenes

Canst thou hate me ?

Manessa

What, thee ?

Andromenes

Then thou canst not hate him Would he
Peer deeper into me

Sempronius [emerging from behind the bush]

Thus will I peer,
And with keen gaze I recognise thee now !

*[Andromenes advances a few paces to meet Sempronius his
arms spread out wide as for an embrace]*

Andromenes [rising]

Thou knowest me ?

Sempronius

Yes, Andromenes !

Andromenes

Know me,—oh, know me !

Sempronius

Once more I slay thee, and once more I curse thee !

Andromenes

Look in my eyes, behold I love thee so !

Sempronius

Stand thus ! My aim is broader
Thou art good, I evil Die !
My pride is prouder thus to fall yet lower !
Bear thou, my spear, an anguish to him !
Bear him Death, kin to me !

SCENE XII

[*Rek's den Sempronius lying down by the dying wood fire
Rek sits beside him and re kindles the fire with a bough*]

Sempronius

Ah, here at last, at last ! Whither should I
Else go ? I might destroy the Magi all
Upon Phares ? What then ? I have the might
But what contrive thereby ? Burn up the world ?
Crass am I growing Rek, I grow like thee

Rek

I hear steps

Sempronius

Steps ?

Who, then ? On the isle are none
Save us two now Who walks abroad

Rek

Steps

Steps

Thou hearest them ?

Sempronius

Truly, this is most strange !
A footfall, and so loud so clamorous

[*He sits down*]

Who might this be ?

Rek

Art thou afraid ?

Sempronius

What I ?

Afraid ?

Rek

Look ! There aloft !

Sempronius

My sight is dim

Rek

One comes! He is terrible! His eyes ablaze!

Sempronius

Halt! What? Yes, 'tis Rhegius!

[He laughs]

So this hunchback,
This fool yet lives! Perhaps he would outlive
Sempronius and Andromenes?

Rhegius

I come

To chastise thee!

Sempronius [laughs]

Wait but until I arm

My glance with venom of ill-will then straight
Thou fallest to dust—How? How? Thou art not
fallen?—

Then now I put my arm forth,—into thy heart
I speed an astral ray to make thy blood
Rush in a fountain from thy mouth!—How now?
What insults now? An astral dart? He jeers
And laughs?

Rhegius

I laugh! For though thou mayest have
Known Envy, and out of Envy didst devise
Banners of yellow for the mystic hosts,
Yet have I now, re birth of all my passion
An energy of envy once thine own
Remember, thou wast my abettor I
Have raised thy banner Mightier am I
Than thou art—even thou—among the black spirits,—
More mighty now, for I have suffered more!

Sempronius

Art thou more evil, too?

Rhegnis

Dare not, thou cur,
 Therein seek solace ! No, I am not evil !
 For this alone, fulfilling the prediction,
 Have I breathed forth foul flame, in this one striving
 To outstrive thee Strain all thy power—yet I
 Will give my life, need were,—nay, I'll surrender
 My immortality through all the ages,
 Only to crush thee dead !

Rek

Ough ! Ough !
 Two champions at bay !
 I am lost, I am lost !
 But am I lost ?
 Perhaps salvation
 Is near at hand
 Oh, horrible !

Sempronius

All who are with me,
 By the lilac pentagram,
 I imprecate to vanquish
 My adversary !—
 Have I been cheated ?
 I exacted victory !—
 All my strength I throw
 Into this dread effort
 Let the Astral Ocean tremble !
 Let it be strength to strength !

Rek

Oh, horrible, horrible !

[*The Magi gaze fixedly on each other, their bodies betraying a
 frightful exertion They make strange movements with their
 hands*]

Rhegnis

No, thou shalt perish !

Sempronius

Mine the victory !

Rhegus

Then, let both perish !

Sempronius

Nay, let all perish !

[*A terrific thunder-clap. The den falls in. Chaos, dust and smoke*]

SCENE XIII

[*A misty mountain at early dawn All sorts of people on the sloping paths, footways and steps climbing to various heights The mountain smokes like a thurible All the voices are heard as one chorus*]

Choir of Those Ascending the Mountain

Time and Life we sing and praise ;
Victor's seal on them we set ,
Home we wend our several ways,—
Water-vessel, water-jet
Praise God and eternity—
Homeward bound let us exult
Sweeter that our bliss may be,
Make our paths more difficult

[*Abbot Dorotheus enters slowly, leading his disciples*]

Dorotheus

Pour down sweetest heart of Jesu, son of God,
Into our bodies' humble vessels peace serene
Scatter the tumult of our passion and our pride ,
Like a cloud of white wash our souls clean
Let our prayers, like wreathing incense, climb
In pure white glistening cloudlets where He trod,
He who is God's son
Let, in truth, the earth become Thy church sublime,
Leading us by all ways up to God . . .
God our Father !

[*Prasius comes up and rapidly outstrips the monks his white robe floating out behind him as in a whirlwind He is striving after the summit*]

Prasius

Thou art God and, I trow it for truth, God of mine !
To thee will I sing, will I chant in my joy !
Dionysus, prevail ! Hallelujah ! Evoe !
Thou art God and, I trow it for truth, God of mine !

[*Annius majestically advances up the ladder, halts, and looks down on the earth*]

Amilius

Let my soul serve the beauty of the universe !

[Sempronius all in black stands on the very lowest step]

Sempronius

Why have ye never with your love washed my soul
pure ?

Blackest of blurs a strong love purifies

Why have ye toyed with me, and spoiled me ? This
for sure,

To harden me, so that ye might chastise

*[Manessa and Rhegius lightly and happily pass him by, and
begin ascending the mountain rapidly. Manessa anxiously
supporting Rhegius]*

Manessa

Henceforth I shall be thine, didst thou not know ?

Rhegius

Art thou not joined then with Andromenes ?

Manessa

I am with him, with all am I But most
Of all am thine, who most hast need of me
March on ! I will support thee—thee, my friend
Thou art yet weak, but I—I am all thine,
Bought by thee at the price of all thy love
For every torment suffered I give joy

(Rek scrambles up through the rocks and thorny bushes)

Rek

I can hope ! I can hope ! The Steel Angel speaks,—
He has told me my spots are washed nearly clean,—
And that up above the sharp mountain peaks
Burns unforgotten the fire of green

Sempronius

Thus all exult—No pardon ! Accurst, indeed !

*[Andromenes winged and radiant, runs down from aloft with a
motion of flight]*

Andromenes

To you, my brothers, you my kin, I speed !
 Andromenes am I, come to your aid,
 So that your suffering be less delayed
 In the consuming fire These I pass by,
 Thither, down to the nethermost I fly,
 Where of both heights and depths is greater need

[*He stops beside Sempronius*]

Sempronius

Avaunt, bright foe !

Andromenes

Oh, gaze, gaze on my eyes !
 Thou art myself, my twin And, when God rests
 Thy light is mine, and mine is thy distress
 Dost thou not recognise ?

Sempronius [*staggering*]

I know now ! This am I ! This truly !

Andromenes

Yes !

[*They embrace each other*]

Dionysus

In this age long moment it is granted men may see
 That all the world is One, is Unity

[*Once again all the voices merge in chorus*]

Choir of Those Ascending the Mountain

We who climb in suffering
 All unlike in mind and face,
 Yearn to merge them in thy being
 As rivulets to one sea race

Dionysus

Those who must go down—they know
 Motion a better thing than God
 Like fast rain they drop and flow,
 Cycle eternal is my road

Vasilisa the Wise

CHARACTERS

Vasilisa the Wise

Mamelsa, her nurse

Kirbit, her father

Merodakh, a god

Furduk, a king

Churilo,
Sredin } his sons
Ivan }

Kikhrom, a noble

Polosatik,
Zhuka, } jesters

Yalya-m, a foreign queen

Ngı, an interpreter

Three Magi

Svetozar
Yalya-da, } the children
Mitra }

Herald and other attendants at the court of Tsar
Furduk Maidens in attendance on *Vasilisa*
Boy maidens warriors and other attendants
at the court of *Yalya-m* Persons in the
visions

Choir

Merging time in timelessness
Art thou always thine own peer ?
Always doth life's stream progress
Always one same destiny steer ?

Dionysus

Old to new this will I tell —
A simple truth for faith to know
I am eternal immeasurable
Yet withal I ever grow

Choir

Growth unaging motion endless —
Sun white pole and night wrapped pole —
Pillars built of powers deathless —
God World poet and World scroll

THE END

Vasilisa the Wise

A DRAMATIC FAIRY TALE

SCENES

- Scene 1 *The Castle of Merodakh*
 „ 2 *The same*
 „ 3 *The Court of Tsar Funduk*
 „ 4 *The Throne Room*
 „ 5 *The Palace Garden*
 „ 6 *On the Steps of the Palace*
 „ 7 *Nursery in the Palace*
 „ 8 *In the Desert*
 „ 9 *The Court of Yalya-m*
 „ 10 *A Room in Vasilisa's Palace*
 „ 11 *The Court of Yalya-m*
 „ 12 *In the Desert*
 „ 13 *The Palace Garden*
 „ 14 *On the Steps of the Palace*

It will perhaps be useful to give some hints to the reader regarding pronunciation. Every Russian name and word has been accented, and it will render the reading much easier and more harmonious if readers will attend to the accentuation. The vowels are to be sounded as in Italian. *y* as a vowel, something like *i* in the word *swim*. *G* is always hard, *ch* as in *church*, *zh* as the *s* in *leisure*, *kh* as German or Scotch *ch*, *s* never as *z*, but always hard as in *sat*, *sit*, *z* always soft as in *zone*, *zero*. In the scenes in Moonland the language has been faithfully transliterated, and the text is thus rendered at the author's express desire. Here, again, the vowels are to be sounded as in Italian, *Ng* as *ng* in *strong*, and the accentuation should be followed when indicated, otherwise, the accent is even.

Vasilisa the Wise

A DRAMATIC FAIRY TALE

SCENE I

[*A veranda in the castle of Merodakh Rammon. A garden visible below. Beyond a fence sands and hills the sea and the sky. Merodakh Rammon sitting on the balcony between two lofty white columns surmounted with carved bulls' heads. He has a curly beard and is resting his head on his hands staring in front of him. Kírbít enters from behind and for a moment stands silent. Kírbít is grey. Merodakh looks round slowly.*]

Merodakh

Thou'rt here? I had already summoned thee
We must now venture!

Kírbít

All seems here transformed!

Merodakh

Aye, here I am God. But I too have changed
I had been ever busy ceaselessly
Enlarging my experience, increasing
My reason's range, till one clear day I heard
A whisper in my heart. 'But what of Love?'
And straightway, in a rosy wreath of vapours,
My brother Gods swirled round me, and my spirit
Was gently held in sweetest lassitude,
And dreams unveiled themselves, like flowers in rain
And rays of starlight rang in melody
A passion and a splendour! Expectation!
Then, in my paradise of visions all
Uncontemplated, then at last I met
The queen and sovereign of my changed soul,—
That queen thy daughter, King of the realm of ice,
Wise brother mine

Kírbít

Aye, aye

Merodakh

Yea,—heretofore, I took no petty portion
 Of the whole universe, wherein to see
 My soul as in a mirror And faithfully
 Did all things mirror me ! My intellect
 Resolved all, all lay open, all lay bared,
 But all too clear and plain, known, void and empty !
 I have too long beheld, revealed to view,
 The molecules' wild revelry of dance,
 Which jig in figures whose repeating series
 Only cold thought could trace But now, but now—
 Look, friend, upon that Ocean ! Seest thou how
 With new life I have plenished it ? For I
 Was weary and displeased with darting dolphins,
 With big mouthed sharks that swam the ocean depths,
 And agile wonderful cephalopods
 So now thou wilt see playful sirens there,
 Who flash their tails and gleam like diamonds,
 And wave their silvery arms enticingly,
 Tresses wild blown, drenched in the salty sea
 For them my passion has conceived yon Proteus,—
 Fat-bellied dolt, web-footed Proteus,—thus
 For ever trying on his scampish tricks,
 For ever fooled Behold him how he snarls,
 And twists and rolls his eyes at their mocking laughter,
 And hear him quack in fury and groan, and then
 He'll burst, and all the sea will be a motley
 Of creaming foam ! Or look upon those hills,
 Those birds, all sorts, with human heads, some crowned,
 Some plumed with diadems of golden flowers,
 Some silent, some that coo or sing or speak
 Listen to them, they grieve and call for help
 There, too, in a garden, round an apple-tree
 A red scaled snake coils, out of his gaping maw
 The quivering tongue slides diamond shaped, his eyes
 Mesmeric stare
 Some flowers are there, blue, with peals of bells
 Chiming like distant gongs, and some send forth
 A fragrance visible
 Along that little path there, suddenly,
 The earth will thrill where Vasilisa's feet

Shall in due season deign to tread the sod
 And what is in my castle ? It is full
 Of butterflies and of coy stillnesses,
 Of shadows, raptures, murmurs of low prayers
 There Demon Passion seals his ruby lips
 With his own finger to restrain himself
 Now, Kirbit, grey old sage, look well on me,
 Me, Merodakh, on Merodakh-Rammon,
 Me, the magician of Chaldaean spells,—
 'Tis I that love the godlike Vasilisa !

Kirbit

Yea, yea

Merodakh

What say'st thou of it ? Ope thine eyes
 Upon the misty future ! Tell me this, how much
 Of happiness bodes there for me ?

Kirbit

No need

To look so far

Merodakh

But thou, art thou not glad
 That Merodakh is wooing Kirbit's daughter ?

Kirbit

On earth are many maids, but there are none
 Like Vasilisa Of the men on earth,
 Wisest of all, most powerful and best,
 Purest of all, is Merodakh the Prince

Merodakh

Let us give praise to Fate !

Kirbit

Aye, render praise ,

For to give praise to Fate is never vain
 And at this very moment, she herself
 Is choosing at her mirror, for herself

Merodakh

Then let us hasten thither

Kirbit

Nay, no need

Hasten there but in thought, and look on her,—
I see her now

Meroddakh

Lend me thine eyes ! I, too,

Can see them

[*Vasilisa's upper room comes into view*]

SCENE II

[*Meroddakh and Kirbit on the veranda as in last scene. The back of the stage represents Vasilisa's broad carved upper room. Vasilisa herself is sitting in the middle of the room in front of a large mirror with two candles burning though it is daylight. On carpeted benches along the walls maidens are sitting in bright dresses. The nurse Mamelfa in the corner.*]

The Maidens' Chorus

The white world has no boundary
Little mirror, let me see !
Nought is far and nought is nigh
Little mirror, teach the eye !
Youth to youth, and peer to peer,—
Comeliness is beauty's right
Who shall be our master here,
Bright little moon to give us light ?

Vasilisa

Sing on, sing on ! I see something

Mamelfa

Better I should utter a spell

Show ! Show !
Search high and low !
On the wondrous champion
Shall our wind-borne breath not blow ?
On our little mirror here
Cause his image to appear !
Bright as sunshine bid it glow !

Vasilisa

I see

Mamelfa

My little lady, let me have a look ! What a fine man !
Oh, his eyes ! They frighten me—his curly beard—the
strength of his lips—the manhood in his temples ! As a
lion among animals, is he among men ! He is splendid,
my Vasilisa ! I can be glad that such an eagle will live
with thee as thy very own

Vasilisa

Splendid, but I want to choose, I want to choose !

Mamelfa

The best of men to the best of maids !

Vasilisa

That is not my will

Mamelfa

If thou wilt it not, there is an end of it Who dare
stand against thy desire ? Thou art wisest of all

Vasilisa

Sing on, maidens, that the glass show, not the best of
men, but another

The Maidens Chorus

Hearts will choose, hearts will be free
Mirror, gleam again for me !
Better, worse—words void and vain,
Heart's own love alone shall reign
Mirror, set them side by side,
Heart's own choice is greatest bliss
He shall win her as his bride,
And her red lips he shall kiss

Vasilisa

The vision is forming sing on, sing on !

Mamelfa

Better I should utter a spell

Swift the fierce wild beast can race
 Set thou forth upon the chase !
 Fly white hawk resplendently !
 Some new face let us now see
 Other men there are of might
 Let gleam below another light

Vasilisa

He is really beautiful so valorous !

Mamelfa

I know him that is Cruslan the Knight Thou needst
 not look further He is our own Knight a good
 Russian And how he will love ! Yes he will forget
 his prowess let his steed grow fat in the stable to sit
 beside Vasilisa

Vasilisa

What ? I am to choose him ?

Mamelfa

Yes my little lady choose him !

Vasilisa

My mirror show me yet another Be not long in
 searching show me now the one who is nearest and
 dearest Oh Mother—look !

Mamelfa

But this man is quite different from the others He is—
 oh too much himself !

Vasilisa

It is he I want

Mamelfa

But why Vasilisushka why my little lady ?

Vasilisa

Mother their part is accomplished his has not begun
 With a fine array of many hued silks on a cloth all
 white marvellous a pattern appeareth in my sight
 I will deck out his soul with his own thoughts and desire
 I will re gild his heart with his own hot fire

Comrade mine, dear one, thou canst not sound how many treasures within thee abound Dear mirror mine, I thank thee anew—thou hast shown me the unknown, thou hast shown me the unready ! Sweet it is to be thinking of him sitting beneath that tree, with his eyes drooped, and wotting not that Vasilisa is gazing at him, that Vasilisa loves him, that she will soon summon him, will soon fondle him, curtsy to him humbly and call him her lord,—that she will soon gather herself up together and bestow herself on him as a gift unstinted ! Oh, Ivanushka, my love and darling, be of all men the happiest ! Grieve not, Iván, my love, let my voice reach out unto thee ! Gaze, gaze upon the ground ! Behold ! It is not grass in front of thee, but a green abyss Gaze on, gaze on, 'tis myself thou seest, my blue eyes and my dark brows, my golden locks my red lips, my mouth, my spirit in the heights and in the depths Canst thou not hear my heart, how hotly it beats ? Knowest thou that destiny is reckoning every one of those beats ? Gaze deeper into the green abyss ! Little heads of children are beckoning to thee Those, Ivan, are our son and our daughter !—My Ivan accepts them, he has smiled

[*Vasilisa's upper room disappears*]

Kírbí

Yea, yea

Merodakh

No, I will not lift a finger,
Nor struggle, whatsoe'er portend So be it !
But—for long time to come, let all things shroud
Themselves in cerements of night, and I
Will sleep For I no longer wish to live

Kírbí

Thou'rt mighty

Merodakh

Hence I suffer mightily

CURTAIN

SCENE III

[The dining room in Tsar Fimauk's palace. Dinner is just over. The servants are clearing up. Zhuka and Polosatik by a long table. Zhuka is sullenly counting up the leavings, gathering them up into a bag. Polosatik is looking at him and laughing. Zhuka is a dwarf, old and hunchbacked. Polosatik is younger and more good humoured, also very small, but merry.]

Polosatik

What is your hoard for ?

Zhuka

Sh—— ! For a rainy day But don't tell anyone !

Polosatik

I should eat them up

Zhuka

Hush ! You might But don't disturb my count

Polosatik

Do you even count the crumbs ?

Zhuka [muttering]

Eleven—twelve—thirteen

Polosatik [laughing aloud]

What's the use of your sweeping them so carefully into a corner ? His Highness the Prince will look after you all right

Zhuka

Stop talking ! You are a fool, and I am sensible. You were born to be a dwarf, with a very scanty supply of wits, but I was born to be a great man. My mother be she accursed, dropped me one day and broke my spine, but I have a big head, out of proportion. I was meant to be big, but I have a bent backbone. I am become a dwarf and a fool, I might have been a merchant—or even a sacristan. But any proper man has an instinct for the accumulation of property. To have no property is to have no body. That's why I am a collector. I sleep with my poor treasure by me, and feel all the time, I have something of my very own !

Polosatik

Oh, what a sage you are, Zluka, you son of a dromedary ! I never accumulate things , I like to think of giving up even other people's treasures ! Yes, to give it all up ! ' Mine ' and ' Thine ' indeed ! I have played at mud-pies and laughed at it all for Kings do the same with the kingdoms they call their own—just the same kind of dirt ! But to give it all up, to escape into the woods, the fields, where there is not a human being near you, only birds and beasts , there to heave a sigh of relief, to look out on the horizon of the white world—to feel it is all, unfenced, unreserved, all mine ! The bright moon in the heavens, and his image on the lake , thee silent trees , the song of the goldhammer , sweetness at heart and a hallowed calm over the whole of the sky,—to embrace the whole world—so—with my little dwarfish hands, and call it mine ! Then I who am so little, so very small, just as well as the biggest giant on earth, I can bestow myself on the world, and say, ' Accept this of me '

A Servant [sweeping]

You dirty fellow, what a mess ! Shoo, you ragamuffin ! Get out from under the table there, you bandy-legged fool you silly idiots, both of you !

[Polosatik runs away and sits on his heels and smiles. Zluka is angrily pushing his possessions into his bag, when the servant scatters them with a broom.]

Servant

Shoo ! Off you go, you vagabond , trying to sneak the crumbs away, are you ? I'll sweep em up ! That's for the dogs

Zluka [hurriedly picking them up]

Let me have them, let me have them ! Don't give yourself the trouble

Servant

Get out ! *[Hits him with the broom]*

Zliúka [yells and rubs the sore spot]

I won't give them up! Don't touch them! They're mine!

[Enter Kíkhrom, a boyár from the steppes he sits on a couch and breathes heavily]

Kíkhrom

Mf——get me some brandy!

Servant

Yes, my Lord and Sire *[Leaves the room]*

Kíkhrom

What are you after, Zliúka, under the table there?

Zliúka

Gathering up the crumbs, gracious Lord! My patron allowed me the crumbs, and I danced with joy, I barked like a dog, and crowed like a cock; I have earned them, my most gracious lord!

Zluka

That's right ! That's the way !

Polosátik

What are you going to beat me for ?

Kikhrom

If only to teach you what differences are ! And I must have some exercise after dinner I will thrash you , then you will tell me whether you would like to change places with me !

Polosátik

But, if you please, sir, if you really want to become a Polosátik I will oblige you, and dispense with the beating

Kikhrom

What a swelled head you have ! You're too smart ! You must be thrashed , then we'll see which side of your face you're laughing on !

Zluka

Don't pardon him ! Give him a lesson !

Kikhrom

Bring me that stick !

*[Enter Ivan Tsatúch]**Ivan*

Kikhrom going to beat somebody ? He shall do nothing of the sort Look at me, Kikhrom Fungásych If you touch one hair of Polo-atuk's head I'll comb your beard for you !

Kikhrom

A bad fellow, a bad fellow the Tsar's third son ! He's never got anywhere ! Bring me that stick ! I'll flay you alive I must have some distraction

Zluka [yells and rubs the sore spot]

I won't give them up! Don't touch them! They're mine!

[Enter Kikhrom a boyár from the steppes he sits on a couch and breathes heavily]

Kikhrom

Mf——get me some brandy!

Servant

Yes, my Lord and Sire *[Leaves the room]*

Kikhrom

What are you after, Zluka, under the table there?

Zluka

Gathering up the crumbs, gracious Lord My patrons allowed me the crumbs, and I danced with joy, I barked like a dog, and crowed like a cock I have earned them, my most gracious lord!

Kikhrom

He-he-he! I see Tsar Gunduk is an open-handed man He keeps you all in the lap of luxury What a host of henchmen he feeds! He is very kind So, you have a good time, do you? Tell me, do you pray, night and morning for the Tsar?

Zluka

We do very comfortably, very comfortably

Kikhrom

And you, Polosatik?

Polosatik

We are so contented my lord, that if I were to be asked, Polosatik, would you like to change places with Kikhrom? I should say, 'No!'

Kikhrom

He he-he! *[Suddenly becomes serious]* What a stupid thing to say! That's an impertinence! Go and fetch me that stick there!

Zluka

That's right ! That's the way !

Polosatik

What are you going to beat me for ?

Kikhrom

If only to teach you what differences are ! And I must have some exercise after dinner I will thrash you, then you will tell me whether you would like to change places with me !

Polosatik

But, if you please, sir, if you really want to become a Polosatik, I will oblige you, and dispense with the beating

Kikhrom

What a swelled head you have ! You're too smart ! You must be thrashed then we'll see which side of your face you're laughing on !

Zluka

Don't pardon him ! Give him a lesson !

Kikhrom

Bring me that stick !

[Enter Ivan Tsarevich]

Ivan

Kikhrom going to beat somebody ? He shall do nothing of the sort Look at me Kikhrom Fungáych If you touch one hair of Polosatik's head I'll comb your beard for you !

Zluka [yells and rubs the sore spot]

I won't give them up! Don't touch them! They're mine!

[Enter Kikhrom: a boyar from the steppes he sits on a couch and breathes heavily]

Kikhrom

Mf—get me some brandy!

Servant

Yes, my Lord and Sire *[Leaves the room]*

Kikhrom

What are you after, Zluka, under the table there?

Zluka

Gathering up the crumbs, gracious Lord My patrons allowed me the crumbs, and I danced with joy, I barked like a dog, and crowed like a cock, I have earned them, my most gracious lord!

Kikhrom

He he he! I see Tsar Funduk is an open-handed man He keeps you all in the lap of luxury What a host of henchmen he feeds! He is very kind So, you have a good time do you? Tell me, do you pray, night and morning, for the Tsar?

Zluka

We do very comfortably, very comfortably

Kikhrom

And you, Polosatik?

Polosatik

We are so contented, my lord, that if I were to be asked, 'Polosatik, would you like to change places with Kikhrom?' I should say, No!

Kikhrom

He he he! *[Suddenly becomes serious]* What a stupid thing to say! That's an impertinence! Go and fetch me that stick there!

Zluka

That's right ! That's the way !

Polosatik

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Kikhrom going to beat somebody ? He shall do nothing of the sort Look at me, *Kikhrom Fungásyh* If you touch one hair of *Polosatik's* head, I'll comb your beard for you !

Kikhrom

A bad fellow, a bad fellow, the Tsar's third son ! He's never got anywhere ! Bring me that stick ! I'll flay you alive I must have some distraction

[*A Herald rushes in out of breath*]

The Herald

treasurers, grooms, cooks, scullery maids of the ante-chamber, serfs of the courtyard! Oyez, oyez, oyez! Make ready! Great events are coming about The Magician Kirbit is coming here in a golden chariot, drawn by eight horses, and with him in her own person, Vasilisa the Royal maiden, on whom the sun never sets but stands still in wonderment Mph—I must draw breath!

[The room fills with Nobles of the Court Prince Churilo and Prince Seredim also enter]

The Herald

The Magician Kirbit is approaching, he is coming not idly, but of set purpose A thing unheard of unseen,—a father bringing his daughter for betrothal Never has Tsar been thus honoured, never has a proper bridegroom been offered such a prize! Vasilisa is asking to marry our Prince!

Kikhrom

Which one?

Churilo

St, you fool—though you are a noble! Which one, indeed? Look at us and then say!

Kikhrom

Of course! Who could the bridegroom be but Churilo Fundukovich?

Churilo

Of course! Yes, but I must hurry up and dress! I have such a big looking glass now, I can see myself from tip to toe! Come along Pan'ka, Gán'ka, Strizhka, Polubratik! Come and help me to dress!

[He goes out with his pomaded suite Tsar Funduk enters, in his dressing gown]

Funduk

What is the matter here?

The Herald

Tsar-batiushka, make ready! Great events are coming about! The Magician Kirbit is approaching, he is coming in a gold chariot drawn by eight horses

Funduk

Yes, yes ?

The Herald

And with him Vasilisa in her own person, the royal maiden on whom the sun never sets but stands still in the heavens in wonderment

Funduk

Yes, enough of that ! Come to the point ! What does he want here ?

The Herald

A husband for his daughter

Funduk

This is serious business ! And I am only in my dressing gown ! I must, at least, get my crown on ! And tell them to light the stove in my throne-room it's always chilly there

Kikhrom

Why, your Majesty, it's summertime now !

Funduk

Light the stove ! I haven't been in there since the winter Besides, it shows kindness and consideration Kirbit is coming and is bringing his daughter ! How the neighbouring Tsars will envy me ! But, the wedding will have to be at his expense, my exchequer won't run to such an outlay ! Hey, there ! Bring me my crown, at once !

CURTAIN

SCENE IV

[*The Throne Room in Tsar Funduk's Palace Funduk on the throne with his crown on The Court around him At his feet a dog Polosatik an ape, and Zluka In front of the throne Churilo, bedizened beside him Seredin, also in new clothes*]

Churilo

Isn't this fine! Look at this hat,—isn't it tall? It's so tall, that it couldn't pass under the door, so I had to give it to my halberdier to carry in front of me, like a holy thing! And my boots—they have gilded and pointed toes, no one else could walk on such fine toes, anyone else would stumble and sprain himself, but I could do a knee dance in them! Have you seen my brocaded belt? Sable! And foreign velvet! And then this! Just smell my head! That's something if you like! Distilled roses from Arabia, made and sent by the Queen Sheherazada And look how my barber Futyr has pointed my beard to a finger-point,—quite ravishing! I looked into the glass, and was amazed I thank my papa and mamma, that they bore me to their glory And I—well, I know enough to put a rich harness on a fine horse! Indeed, I have my doubts whether Vasilisa Kirbitevna is quite the mate for me

Polosatik

Prince Seredin, step forward as well Possibly Vasilisa the Wise is coming after you [*Laughter, jeers*]

Seredin

Well? We have little to say in the matter Either she has made her choice, or she has not We shall go on just the same There are plenty of other girls in the world

Funduk

Seredin's a most, most sensible fellow Churilo's a fop but Seredin's a man of sense

Kikhron

And Prince Ivan has a spotty face and walks with a limp, and as for his brains—he hasn't any! He's a degenerate

Funduk

He had a different mother They all had Churlo's mother was a French princess, very slender in body, and witty in mind, finicky and most difficult to get on with

Kikhrom

She died—did she not?

Funduk

No, but she eloped, thank the gods! A detestable hussy! She had a secretary, and I wished him further

Well, let's say no more about it State secrets, he he-he! And Seredin's mother was a German She gave me splendid dinners! So cheap and satisfying! She really did die She loved eating On her death-bed she called me to her, went through all her books and accounts, one by one, and then said, 'There you are. Funduk Volotovitch, it's all straight,' and then she died

Zluka

That's a queen, if you like!

Funduk

As for Ivan! I was getting on in years, and this very Kirbit, as a kindness, sent me a young Tatar woman—just to keep me warm Oh, what a shy young girl she was! She bore me Iván, and died in childbirth She was silent, all her life, and in death

Kikhrom

Stop! They have arrived! Beat the drums! Sound the trumpets! Cry, 'Hail, noble visitors!'

[*Drums trumpets and shouts Kirbit enters in a fantastic costume as a Mongol Prince and Vasilisa, veiled*]

Funduk

Welcome Kirbit Yatmánovich! Thou hast caused us great joy in deigning to come Hail!

Kirbit

Tsar, I have a wise daughter, wiser than her father, the maiden Vasilisa, whate'er she wish, she does, and I help She has decided to marry thy son, and so it shall be I hope that thou will consent, brother Funduk

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Funduk

Wherefore should I not consent? Dowries are given not for bridegrooms, but with brides Only—my exchequer is a bit shaky, and a wedding would mean a feast for everyone

Kirbit

Of that no more! The fame of the wedding shall spread over all lands The casks of wine in Kirbit's cellar have already been broached We will pay for it all! Drink, and be merry, honourable people, at the wedding of Vasilisa!

Funduk

Let me kiss thy hand, Kirbit Yatmánovich! [*He descends from the throne and they kiss*] Behold my boy, Churilo, Tsarévich of Dark-Russia!

Vasilisa

That is not he

Churilo

Not he? Vasilisa! [*Struts round her like a peacock*] Come and kiss me, my betrothed! I am Churilo Fundukovich I am he! Blush not! Be not abashed! Do not thrust thy sleeve forward to hide thyself! Do not droop thine eyes! I see thou art indeed my proper mate, my equal

Vasilisa

Thou art not the man It was not he that I saw, not he I chose I have nothing to hide, I do not droop my eyes But I am not thy mate, nor thine equal Thine indeed? Why, Churilo, thou art a fop, and a coxcomb!

Churilo

Oh Vasilisa, be not ashamed! Oh Vasilisa, be not coy! I will love thee I swear it! Why wilt thou not acknowledge that it was my image, my eyes, that ensnared thy heart? A Venetian painter painted my portrait I had one hundred copies reproduced All the princesses

asked for copies, and they sigh, when they look upon the picture and press the gilded frame to their white breasts

Vasilisa

This is not the man, I repeat Has not Churilo any brothers?

Seredin

[*Flushing all over*] Yes, he has, I am

Vasilisa

Nor is he the man

Seredin

I knew it She'd never suit me! Let the Firebird into the palace, and nothing will come of it but a fire! [*He retires into the crowd*]

Kirbit

Where is the third prince? It is evidently he Vasilisa seeks Is there a third?

Funduk

A third? There is—but he

Kikhrom

has a spotty face, walks with a limp, and has no brains

Zhuka

He has run away He doesn't want to see Vasilisa He has run off into the wood he-he-he He is lying down somewhere on the grass as he always does—his hands under his head his nose pointing to the sky lying flat! Lucky, if he's not singing, too!

Polosatik

I know where he is! If it's any use, I'll run and tell him I'll be back in an instant He is quite near by, in the garden, by the pond listening to the frogs

Zhuka

He-he! The frogs are holding assembly, and he is keeping order with a stick! Our third prince is half witted

[*Polosatik runs out*]

Funduk

Kirbit Yatmanovich what man would be his own enemy? I desire such a bride in my house, but I advise thee not to give Vasilisa to Ivan. If she wish for a man to boast of take Churilo, if she wish for a man who will be companionable, let her take Scredin. I am your friend. I do my friend my best obeisance. Buy a horse from the stud not a pig in a poke. Take a hawk of mine, not a chicken!

Vasilisa

Call him hither, bring him, I wish at once to see him, eye to eye, to take him by the hand and kiss his lips.

Funduk

That's a jolly sort of girl!

Kikhrom

I have an idea! If the third son suit them, it's all the same to us, the price is the same and the profit may be even greater.

[Enter Polosdrik leading Ivan Tsarevich by the hand. The latter has his harp under his other arm.]

Polosdrik

Here is our darling Vanya the harpist—Ivan Tsarevich, Prince of Dark-Russia.

PAUSE

Vasilisa

Ivan Tsarevich beloved bridegroom,
My darling bridegroom my blue-eyed sweetheart!
Like a pure white birch tree a lofty birch tree,
A maiden flourished with curling tresses,
Like a dark red raspberry, sweet red raspberry!
On the sun she gazed, and sucked in sweetness
Her stately figure her eyes swift darting,
Her lips like coral, above her eyebrows
A brow reflective, her golden tresses
Like ears of corn bewildering—
A heart of happiness a mind of wisdom
A gift of wizardry, a well of prophecy—

All this for thee was to the world begotten,—
 All this for thee had bloomed and blossomed,
 That thou shouldst be happy, that thou be contented,
 That, for this bounty, thou give gratitude
 To Fate the Omnipotent, our sovereign mistress
 Give me thy marriage ring, Ivan Tsarevich

Ivan

It is difficult to speak with thee I will not spurn the
 cup of happiness Let my harp now help me Only
 be my song worthy for such an hour!

Whence, oh whence, this golden shower, whence descends
 it on me streaming?

Why oh why, hath it thus happened, happiness of
 long drawn dreaming?

How shall I uphold this chance? It is full to over-
 flowing,—

How shall I preserve this bounty, lest it flit without my
 knowing?

How believe myself? Or can I, can I, ever touch this
 vision?

What if from such dreams I waken, sobbing in my
 self derision?

No, I dare not touch it, nor believe this noontide sun,
 nor measure

With mine eyes these dreadful wondrous depths of
 happiness and pleasure

Yet, my hands stretch forth! Fingers, dare to kiss
 those fingers yonder!

My heart's blood and my heart's feeling shout, grow
 hot, rejoice—and wonder

Will my fingers falter, finding nought to caress me or
 avow me?

Will my hand drop empty, will the weight of woe descend
 and bow me?

Will my head droop down for grieving and my curly
 locks grow grey,

When I lose these hopes, these yearnings, which now
 hold me in their sway?

Chorus

What a long yarn!

Vasilisa

I am alive, I am burning ! I am here, all here ! I love thee ! Dear gentle-featured harpist, thy beseeching song is but too late, for the hour is come for the shout of victory to re-echo

Polosátik

Rejoice, honourable people ! Cry, Hurrah ! Iván Tsarévich and Vasilisa the Fair have found each other for all time !

[*Drums, trumpets, shouts*]

CURTAIN

SCENE V

[*The pond in Tsar Fundrik's garden Just before dawn Frogs croaking Ivan Tsarevich at the edge of the pond*]

Ivan

My beautiful one is asleep I asked her 'Tell me whom am I to thank?' 'Sovereign Destiny,' she replied Oh, Sovereign Omnipotent Destiny, I am in thy debt, in debt eternal and unpayable! I will consent to die, not once, but a thousand times,—to undergo torment and martyrdom,—and will never leave off praising thee Nothing on earth can ever equal my happiness How can this be? Why does she love? Sudden she came, mine she became! I was just now caressing her with these very hands! The bliss is too great for my heart to hold . . . It will soon be dawn, the dew is glistening The mist is curling over the pond Oh, think I cannot think! A golden sea at full tide has swept into my heart and splashes majestically, melodiously I drowned in an ocean ethereal, there where my goddess lies asleep, I sat breathless with love

Here on this bank some god abideth,
 Here the altar of godly power,
 Here the heart of the world resideth,
 The sun's own goblet, 'mid lilies aflower
 Mine to be the Priest at the Gate,
 I will make my censer to glow
 God's descent here I will await,
 Flashing like lightning to us below
 Undismayed, I will shield my sight,
 Marriage divine is above all desires
 I sing the song of earthly delight,
 Our best gift is the sigh that aspires
 There on her purple couch without rising,
 Stretching to me her arms like rays—
 (She is like springtime, like rejoicing,—
 She is like love and melodious lays!)
 "Why dost thou linger so long, beloved?
 I have dreamed of none but of thee
 Come my betrothed, embrace me kiss me,
 I am all thine be lord unto me!"

Vasilisa [approaching him]

Iván Tsarévich

Iván

My goddess !

Vasilisa

Look around thee ! Thou seest—the dawn has kindled with a streak of light to the East, seest thou those grey clouds ? Now the pond is turning a cold steel-blue, now that bush is silently rustling Thou hearest a shepherd far away plays on his pipes, and the birds are chirruping here and there, as they list Remember every moment may be an eternity, every moment may be as a seal At this moment our love in this life has been sealed, and in all lives to come Here we shall love inseparably, and beyond—everywhere—we shall seek each other Not marriage for this life is it I offer thee, but for ever Think, and say, wilt thou ?

Iván

Think ? I wish only to kiss the earth at thy feet

Vasilisa

Better kiss me on my lips !

[They kiss]

Open thine eyes, my silly boy ! The sun is rising, his rays are kindling the horizon

CURTAIN

SCENE VI

[*By the staircase in front of the Palace The Tsar and his Court, jesters, etc*]

Funduk

Oh, how bored I am ! [*Yawns.*]

Kikhrom

Yes, those jesters ought to be whipped ! If the King's bored, send the fools to the stable yard

Polosátik

Alas ! our jigs and ingenuity now weary Tsar Fúnduk ; all of our devices only annoy him With all your whippings you cannot whip anything more out of us But, if you want to cheer the royal spirit, whom should you request but Princess Vasilisa—she is so resourceful, she is all but a magician !

Funduk

True, I forgot Call me my children hither !
And bring me my bowl ! And let Vasilisa make me merry !

Polosátik

Oh, our dear old King's aweary !
It's the devil of a teazer !
Bring some punch to make him cheery,
Vasilisa—will it please her ?

Zhúka

Oh, a wondrous queen—ahá !
Vasilisushka á á !
We had wine—a full half-tun—
But, alas, its gone and done !
Now we silly jester-folk
Have forgotten how to jest !
She shall wear our tattered cloak !
We can give ourselves a rest !

[*Enter Ivan and Vasilisa, Churilo Seredin, and others*]

Funduk

Now my pet, Vasilisushka, show us something interesting I am growing old, I am bored, I nod, and I feel our bare bone Godfather looking over my shoulder

Vasilisa

How shall I make thee merry, Tsar Funduk?

Funduk

If only I knew how! But already thou hast smiled, and I am the merrier Thy smile is so beautiful, it is as though it gleamed with pearls, and so I too laugh Oh, Ivan has a fine wife!

Vasilisa

Wouldst thou, Tsar, that I should show thy sons each as he really is?

Funduk

But how?

Vasilisa

Do ye all look yonder at that big granary?

Kikhnom

How wonderful! It has disappeared behind a mist!

Vasilisa

Now I breathe on the mist! Now ye shall behold Churilo's soul!

CHURILO'S SOUL

[A street with houses on both sides Churilo absurdly overdressed is walking along the street and after him a chorus of gals young women and widows]

The Women's Chorus

Oh ye gods and holy saints!
He's going so far we're like to faint!
Once we have seen Churilo's face,
After him we all must race

[*Spoken in dialogue*]

He looked at me, he aimed at me—
 He winked my dear, he winked at me !—
 No, 'twas at me he smiled so sweetly,
 Like a turkey stepping neatly !—
 I shall fall upon my knees
 In my love's high ecstasies !—
 Look again, Churilo dear !
 See you no more sweetmeats here ?—
 Oh, one word of thy dulcet speech !—
 One lock as keepsake, I beseech !—
 If he kissed me, I should die !—
 Oh, we women are much too shy !—
 Whom thou lovest, do but say !—
 Order us, and we obey !—

Churilo [in the vision]

Bah ! How they weary me ! I cannot make my
 way for this rabble of women ! I must take my
 hunting stock and whip them out of my way ! I know
 I am very dapper, but must they therefore tear me into
 little bits ? Listen whichever of you I want, I will
 whistle for, and drive ahead, until then, stop your
 babble ! Oh—the youths are assembling as well !

[*The youths come in, gloomily crowding together and mumbling*]

The Youths

Envy gnaws us ravenous,
 Yet, we're helpless,—all of us !
 Let me take my axe and—crash !
 His looks simply send us smash !
 Thus accursed Churilo's charms
 Sap our strength and slack our arms

Churilo [in the vision]

What are you grumbling about ? If you want to
 enter my service, you are welcome, if you want to
 contend with me, I'll have you soundly drubbed

Look ! The moon is rising in the sky You silly
 things, what big round eyes you are making at me !

Don't glower at me! I know I'm very pretty, but it isn't for your sake, you white-jawed thing!

The stars, too, play at being coy maidens, they open and blink their eyes. Even in the heavens above, all things that are, are smitten with me! It amazes me how beautiful I am!

If I look into the water, the water stops. The wind dandles my curls on my temples and hushes. And the animals,—they, too! Look! The little hare darts by, cocks her eye at me, and *halte!*—she is rooted to the ground, and then she tumbles down the dell head over heels! Silly thing, she has fallen in love with me!

So such a paragon am I, that I take my airy way, knowing that all things on earth are in love with me, and that those who are not are envious! My life is like one long honey-bath—ha ha ha!

[*The mist rises*]

[*Every one laughs aloud*]

Churilo

What are you all cackling about? What is there funny about it? Am I not beauteous?

Polosdtik

Oh yes, very beauteous!

Churilo

Then don't cackle! You're a lot of idiots! How I can stand your company!

Funduk

Now, my entertainer, my wise-woman, show me Seredin's soul

SEREDIN'S SOUL

[*A brilliantly lit dining room. A table well set with cakes, bread and ale. Children big and little sitting on the benches stout young wife looking out of the window*]

The Wife

Hush, children! Daddy's come home!

The Children [merrily, but in a subdued tone]

Daddy s come home !

[Enter Seređin]

Seređin

Well, well ! We have had a very successful journey ! Kiss me, my wife ! Children, come and kiss my hands ! Have you been good children ? I will give each of you who has been good a gingerbread , those who have been up to pranks, a good hiding ! Come, sit down at table,—in your proper places—the elder servants at the bottom of the table, holiday style

[The servants, entering bow low to their master all sit at table and eat in silence]

Seređin

Remember, at my table everyone eats in silence I don't like talking and joking If you re doing something, do it ! If you're eating, eat ! Time is not given you for idle chatter and games That s my rule Isn't that what I tell you ?

From all sides

Yes sir, yes sir, quite so !

A Young Servant [entering]

Prince Seređin, Lord and Master Limon Limonych, our neighbour, is in serious trouble , he has important business, so he says, urgen^t business Shall I admit him ?

Serea

Let me see ! Limon is a man of consequence Certainly, admit him ! He will be a good friend to have

Limon Limonych [entering]

I salute you, Prince Seređin !

Seređin

Be so good as to come in and sit down With what may I regale you ? *[To his wife]* Serve him, my wife ! My servants, lay a place for Limon Limonych

Seredin

But, my dear little sister, that is nothing short of blackening the family name

Churilo

Vasilisa has overshot the mark

Funduk

You think so? She is amusing me She has made me laugh, till the tears rolled down my cheeks Seredin is an upright man! That's about what you will be like, when you marry

Churilo

Let her just show us her dear Ványa's soul Ho ho ho!

Funduk

Yes! Call up Iván's soul for us to see!

Vasilisa

I do not wish to do so, Tsar There is very little to laugh at in it, and you wanted to be amused

Seredin

No, no! All of us, please!

Iván

Vasilisa, my incomparable wife, it may not be amusing, but I should like it

Vasilisa

Then I will, at thy command

THE SOUL OF IVÁN

[Lofty crags, deep precipices The Green Star glistening over the snowy surface Iván Tsarevich, in the half light walking with a shepherd's crook]

Iván

I will succeed, or die! My feet are all bloodstained, my skin is all torn But all my strength yet remains with me Oh my Star wonderful, green as emerald, I will gain thee or die

How can I fare ? No path anywhere ! Silent as 'mong the dead Wait—a bridge ahead, as fine as a thread, across the precipice But if there I tread, death awaits me there Yet I must go on, nor of myself have care, what reck I of life or soul, my star beyond is my one goal So on, still on, though my head is turning, and black the abyss that beckons me ! To my one star my soul is yearning, be it for death or victory !

[He walks on the threadlike bridge]

Someone supported me invisibly, on someone's shoulder I could rest ! Oh, my friend, my one affinity, with love for thee I am possessed Me gently everywhere thou supportest, in the snowdrifts my chill body thou warmest

[He crosses the bridge, stops and looks round]

I am cold ! I am hungry ! Not a house in sight ! I am so high up ! Oh, my strength fails me ! *[He falls]* Now Death is surely at hand ! Yet ere death come, let me see thee,—thou, my friend invisible !

Graciously someone lifts me from the snow, warms me and my limbs miraculously glow On my way again, a long, long way ! But with my eye, I can descry my goal and destiny To the stars the madman soars !

[He presses ahead with all his might]

Across my path a torrent roars Shall I plunge there ? Then death were unavoidable Yet surely everywhere about me lurks death Let us be hardy and inflexible ! Death like victory accomplisheth !

[He flings himself into the waves of the torrent]

I am swept away ! I am lost ! Farewell, my dreams ! Farewell, my Star ! Oh ! *[A wave flings him on the opposite bank He comes to himself again]* Where am I ? Alive ? Victory ! My ally, to thee my thanks ! But what is this ?

Gates heavily barred ! With fiery eyes, a tall stern guard ! From his shaggy brows the cold blows hard

He wears a sword Who art thou ? The master of the marvellous hoard ? Beyond the gates, the gleam of my Star ! Thou, ancient guard, avaunt ! With all the force of my will, I rend the bar

The Guard

Halt ! No passage here ! Here all effort is frustrated

Ivan

What ? I have come so far, and everywhere some secret help accompanied me ? And shall I now be forgotten and meekly wait, until the mist engulfeth me ? Defend thyself !

[The Guard smites him with his sword Ivan falls stunned]

Ivan [slowly raising himself]

I cannot believe myself betrayed ! Surely I had a goal ? Surely those flowers will not fade that have blossomed in my soul ? Strength to rise now, I have none ! I can wait, my race is run Perhaps my brothers will come on Is it death ? E'en Death can answer Yea, Death alone can say me nay

PAUSE

[Ivan groans and tosses The Guard stands impassively over him Suddenly the bars fall apart, the gates open and behind them stands Vasilisa in a dazzling garment of green the Star apparently shining from over her head]

Ivan

Thou ? The star shines over thee ? Thou wast my aid art thou my aim and prize ? Thou wast the trumpet summoned me, art thou also the pipes of paradise ?

[Vasilisa descends towards him Then it becomes clear that the Star is as remote as ever but shines with a light not the same as before]

Vasilisa

No not yet, my Prince my Pilgrim, I am not the Star, it is still far ahead Thy vow my Prince, thy vow still remember—still forward tread !—But thou hast

attained me, who am wise and mighty, we twain will
 wend the road without end, the secret of birth and
 the secret of sepulchre, we two together must learn and
 perpend Two fold the links, the links are welded,
 reaching the Emerald Star on high Trust me, though
 our ways are nought but desperate, those on the Road
 shall never more die

[*The mist rises*]

Funduk

I don't understand a word of it !

Chunilo

What a long yarn !

Seredin

Vasilisa has overshot the mark !

Polosatik

Some people it is unwise to under-tand, but, as to this,
 one must go on tiptoe, and still never get at it

Funduk

It all bores me frightfully !

Ivan [to Vasilisa]

Be thou blessed among women, be thou blessed Accursed
 be he who, even for a moment, betray such a love !

Vasilisa

Hush ! Hush !

CURTAIN

SCENE VII

[Nursery in the Palace of I d i a d Vasilisa Their baby boys sleep
up in the cradle Mamefa as a nurse, putting clean baby
clothes in order Vasilisa singing in a low tone]

Vasilisa

Homeward turn thy memory,
Newborn manling, heart of me,
Whom from somewhere far or near,
Hearts concordant summoned here
In the ocean of fiery foam
Lies Life's uncreated home
Strught therefrom, into the Dark,
To my bosom flies a spark
Dipped in blood, the Spark grows warm,
Love shall give thee bodily form
With my soul's whole potency
I create thee silently,
A new flowet from my root,
From the sun another shoot
Earthly art thou and divine,
Darling thou and son of mine!
Thou didst dive to depths below,
Titan there in strength to grow
Thence thou shalt on outspread wings
Rise to Heaven all nether things
Home to Ocean then and pay
Dark Earth's tribute to the Day

Mamefa [*approaches*]

He is too much like the Prince!

Vasilisa

All the greater joy!

Mamefa

For what? That he is never one thing or another for
long at a time?

Vasilisa

He desires better things He is a traveller

Mamelfa

On the threshold—where one stumbles !

Vasilisa

No

Mamelfa

But yes !

Vasilisa

He is my love

Mamelfa

Thou lovest weakness, because thyself thou art strong
Thou wert born to be a mother ! Now when thou hast
a little boy, perhaps thou wilt at last understand the
need of a master in the house Yes, thus it is, little
lady

Vasilisa

Had I twenty children I should love Ivan none the less
And what children we all are ! Which in itself is
splendid

Mamelfa

Were thy son like to thee, I had said ' Here is one on
whose brows great deeds are written by his ancestry '
But—as he is—who can tell ?

Vasilisa

Look how pretty he is !

Mamelfa

Were he but like thee, then !

Vasilisa

Enough ! I shall be angry !

[*Exit* *M*] - 'Mistress of the Toy room'

Mistress

Will it please the Lady Vasilisa to look what toys have
been made in the toy room ?

SCENE VII

[Nurser, in the Palace of It du and Vasilisa Their baby boys sleeping in the cradle Mamelfa as nurse putting clean baby clothes in order Vasil'ia singing in a low tone]

Vasilisa

Homeward turn thy memory,
Newborn manning heart of me,
Whom, from somewhere far or near,
Hearts concordant summoned here
In the ocean of fiery foam
Lies Life's uncreated home
Straight therefrom, into the Dark,
To my bosom flies a spark
Dipped in blood, the Spark grows warm,
Love shall give thee bodily form
With my soul's whole potency
I create thee silently,
A new flow'ret from my root,
From the sun another shoot
Earthly art thou and divine,
Darling thou and son of mine !
Thou didst dive to depths below,
Titan there in strength to grow
Thence thou shalt on outspread wings
Raise to Heaven all nether things
Home to Ocean then, and pay
Dark Earth's tribute to the Day

Mamelfa [approaches]

He is too much like the Prince !

Vasilisa

All the greater joy !

Mamelfa

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Vasilisa

He desires better things He is a traveller

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But—as he is—who can tell ?

Vasilisa

Look how pretty he is !

Mamelfa

Were he but like thee, then !

Vasilisa

Enough ! I shall be angry !

[Exit the Mistress of the Toy room.]

Vasilisa

Stay thou with him, Mámelfa. I have had carved some wooden toys for him, for which I gave them the design. I will be back immediately; and, when he wakes up, I will have them ready to give to him. [*She leaves the room.*]

Mámelfa [*after a long look at the baby*]

A fine boy! But still, Vasilisa made a mistake. I was all the time looking for another man, Rámmon Nebukhovich. *He* would have had a son! Oh, a son! Yes, a son! Perhaps it might have been the Long-awaited one himself. Yes, perhaps. She is wise,—very wise—but, very wayward. Does she want to be the master? A woman must see God in her husband. If only the man adores, no good can come of it.

[*Enter Ivan and Polosdík.*]

Iván

Where is Vasilisa?

Mámelfa

She has gone to the toy room.

[*Iván Tsarévich sits down by his son's cradle, Polosdík standing near by.*]

Polosdík

Oh, my dear Ványa. Thou has frightened me. Oh! Say but a word!

[*Iván is silent and melancholy.*]

Polosdík

Thou wast like this crewhile. Thou wouldst sing and laugh—and all at once fall bemused. Beneath thy flowers and thy greensward lie blind depths. Who is it has stung thy soul? What has pierced thy heart?

PAUSE

Polosdík

But I think thou wilt tell this to Vasilisa, and then I faint with fear!

Ivan

Thinkest thou she will be angry ?

Polosátik

Yet, Vanya, consider for thyself, my friend ! You have been married one year Thy wife is the beauty of beauties,—so sage, that all the sages on earth gape at her, thy son is two months old yet thou

Ivan

Even therefore

Polosátik

Why so ?

Ivan

I am too happy I walk as in a dream I am not myself I am so dazzled that I cannot see I walk in the azure skies There is nought left to desire I am melting in molten gold My soul has softened from surfeit, has become unedged like a ball of butter Not that I desire woe,—no, but exertion I want to wish I want there to be something lacking That is it ! I wish to wish, and my wish is strong, so strong that it makes me unhappy I am unhappy from happiness Happiness is not for me A man must move, but I lie in a lotus eaters bower, and slumber The bird of eternity sings to me I desire to awake I am losing myself in bliss She will understand, will Vasilisa

Polosátik

[*shaking his head*] Oh, Ivan Tsarevich, ill bodes it if thus it be ! Dost thou not value happiness ? Dost thou peer out of thy golden paradise into the murk ? When thou goest forth from the gates, thou shalt know what sorrow is And when thou art gazing on the gleam of the rays of lost Eden, then, Tsarevich, thou wilt weep !

Ivan [*frightened*]

I should come back, Polo-atik, I should run back !

Polosatik

Thou wouldst not be allowed Thou wouldst be told,
'Thou who dost not value happiness, go forth into the
outer darkness!'

Ivan

Do not frighten me, Polosatik! That makes it terrible

Polosatik

Stay here!

Ivan

I cannot, it beckons me, as from a lofty bridge into
the abyss, it says, 'Leap down, leap down!'

Polosatik

It is the demon calling

Ivan

Nay, my soul! Perchance my soul is a demon

Polosatik [aside]

Mamelfa is listening

Ivan

Didst thou hear me, nurse? I desire to ask my leave

Mamelfa

Art thou not the man and the master? Or hast thou
sold thyself for a season like a serf?

Ivan

But thou how dost thou counsel me?

Mamelfa

Go thine own way Whate'er thou dost, do swiftly!

Ivan

My heart is torn

Polosatik

Farewell Tsarevich, thou hast—may I put it thus?—
but devised thee thy sorrow from very surfeit

Iván

I know not , but my heart is troubled

[Enter Vasilisa happy carrying a bundle of toys in her apron]

Vasilisa

Look, Ványa, look ! I have just had these carved out of some of my own designs There's a fine couple ! The Wandering Jew, thin as a screw ! Look at this Shah Shar Puzan Look at his dear little Tatar smile !

Polosatík

He who is lean is bitter he who is fat is sweet but surfeit does not always bring happiness Lady, I kiss thy fingers

[He goes out]

Vasilisa

Ivan Tsarévich is again overcast ? I look again into the belovèd eyes and see the night glooming Hide not thine eyes ! Gaze into mine ! I want to read thee

[She looks hard at him and becomes serious]

Go, Tsarevich, go ! Who holds thee back ? Go, my blessing ! Speed forth swiftly ! Remember, we with our little hero will await thee *[She smooths his brow]* Now, be merry ! Within seven days thou shalt be on the road What ? Thou art easier already ? Yes So let us have these seven days Shall it be thus ?

Ivan

The tears that are welling in my eyes—it is from adoration of thee

Vasilisa

I see, I see ! From my eyes bitter tears have flowed But I am not foolish ! I have released my hawk from his jess From his eyes sweet tears are flowing Let my hawk remember he is free But it is I am in his cage, in his chamber I have now nowhere to go My heart is of one piece , I gave it, indivisible , I bestowed it irresumable

And pants for breath and fails and fainteth
 Now my song is for its death preparing,
 Now its golden beak in blood empurples —
 Oh, my wife, my one beloved,
 Step forth at night-time on thy stairway
 Gaze on the moon, let summer breezes whisper,
 And for me, my wife, for me, be anguished!
 Be anguished, and sing with thy voice tuneful,
 Sing, with thy voice silver-ringing!
 Like a swan, bid thy song melodious
 On white wings surmount the horizon,
 Fly to me in the land far-wondrous! —
 But, half way across it flags and wearies
 Painfully flaps its wings, so wearily
 And half way across, two birds are meeting,
 They have met and are comforted
 They sing a new song, like their first singing;
 They embrace again, breast to breast clasping,
 And they kiss again, beak to beak cleaving
 Our souls in a blissful throbbing
 In cloudland have met in the moonlight

[As soon as the sound of Ivan's song and harp dies away music is heard inexpressibly and unbearably sweet like the tinkling of bells]

Ivan

What is this? Never in my life have I heard such songs! Such harmonies have never been known!
[Raises himself] What are these marvellous travellers?

[Ostriches pass by in pairs in glittering harness. Strange persons are seated on silver saddles. It is impossible to tell their sex. They wear silver chain mail instead of clothes and their skin is like white ivory. Their bodies are brittle and their heads top heavy with the weight of their black hair. Their eyes are terribly big and mournful. Their mouths also mournful but small. The first ostrich is led by the bridle by one such boy. Other boy maidens mounted on this first ostrich ride with his head thrown back looking at the moon with both eyes wide open like two dark globes of night and singing. The others are playing on strange instruments.]

The Boy-Maiden [sings]

Nannau knuyaya nannau u-u
 Minyata-a-ai
 Ei-ai
 Lyu-lyu
 Tannago natalpi Kannaya a
 Ta-nga nga a
 Ei-ai,
 Gar-gar,
 Ger ger

Ivan

Halt ! What manner of people are ye ?

The Caravan Leader

Hail, good traveller ! We are returning to the land of Ae-va-u, the Land of the Moon We have descended from our mountains to get the golden sand and other materials I am the interpreter, Ng1, and these are Pyati ai, the rays of the moon our Knights and Ambassadors

Ivan

Is your country far away ?

Ng1

It is near by One day's journey Only, none but we know the way thither

Ivan

And what is the odour that makes me faint and blissful ?

Ng1

That is tummi yayú, the scents of our Queen

Ivan

And where is your Queen ?

Ng1

At home Wherever we go we carry with us her scents and her portrait

Ivan

Show me the portrait

Ngî

It is better not You will be enchanted Her hair and eyes are not those of humans but a human cannot tear himself away from them She scarcely ever moves, but when she raises her hand to her head or smiles, the Mighty Ones themselves stretch forth their arms and are grateful

Ivan

What is her name ?

Ngî

Her name is Yalya-m the dumb Queen

Ivan

Why is she so called ?

Ngî

Because she never speaks

Ivan

Let me look at the portrait

*[Ngî speaks to the boy maiden on the camel who was singing
The latter takes a little jewelled portrait out of his case]*

Ngî

Look !

Ivan

Take me with you !

Ngî

I cannot !

Ivan

I desire it !

Let us go ! *Ngî [looks at him fixedly]*

[Takes him by the hand and they pass on]

Nannau, knuyayá nannau-u-u
 Minyata a-ai
 Ei ai
 Lyu lyu

[*The song dies in the distance*]

Polosatik [*awakening*]

Where art thou, Iván Tsarévich ?—Where is he ? What, he has gone away ? Where has he gone ? Oh,—alas ! Look ! He has left his harp behind and forgotten it, and Polosatik as well. He has forgotten his jester Polosatik [*He weeps*]

[*The song is heard from a great distance*]

Tannago natalpi kannaya-a
 T nga-nga ai,
 Ei ai
 Gar gar,
 Ger ger
 Aeó aeó lyu-lyu u

INTERLUDE

[*A blue, black and silver curtain descends. The interpreter Ngí advances to the front of the stage. He is dressed in a silver net and ruby fez with a blue tassel on his abundant locks. He sits down on the bench in front, takes out a silver flute and plays a song on it. Then he sings.*]

Uya lálu,
 Layu lálu
 Annennai, 'laywya 'koyálu

Ngí

I am going to tell you about Ae va u

I love my country. There is no sun there, no night, it is the colour of the blue moon. A little country and fresh, is Ae-va u

There are lakes there, and they are calm

Pashti Muri, the white lizard, raises his head on his flexible neck out of the water to the moon, and looks up with his amber coloured eyes, and says yagiya-yagi

There are rivers there, they foam and purr softly. Their song is called *frilul-zelzar*, the murmur of the earth. This is the name we give to every other prayer. The plants there have broad pale leaves or long flexible needles. Our flowers are very, very much larger than the heads of men, and they are fragrant. Most lovely of all is the odour of the flower *Ya-ju*. It is of this our Queen smells and the Spring smells.

We call Spring the season when *Ya-ju* blossoms. We all then are gently elated. We go forth into the woods, and sing and love. Winter we call, the season when *Ya-ju* withers and dies. We all then return to work. What work? We, too, have work to do. Our work we call *pfa-shaké*, which means 'compulsory trifles'.

We build palaces. The columns are very slender, for everything amongst us is very light, I do not know why. Our people find it very difficult to walk on the earth, but we dance when we are at home, and we therefore call your earth *rgarg*, which means 'clumsiness'. We build slender towers of many-coloured glass.

I could tell you more, but you would not believe me.

Very well! I will go! But I wanted you to know something about Ae va-ú.

Prince Ivan is there now. He is our guest. We call him Liumi Taize-Vevan, dear guest Ivan. Will you also please be our dear guests for a few minutes?

Béyuh-liumi taizei! Greetings, dear guests!

(The Curtain rises. He goes.)

SCENE IX

[*The Court of Queen Yalya m in the country of Ae va u The light there is always pale blue even blue The further wall is open the patterned canopy supported by very thin columns A glittering blue landscape vaguely discernible beyond The rooms are filled with marvellous plants with big leaves and many blooms Birds with long tails and crests perch on silver trapezia multi coloured patterned lanterns from various directions thin streams of fountains can be heard*

On the bed facing the audience in the attitude of a Sphinx lies Yalya m looking out with kindly childish eyes Her small mouth is that of a mute her luxuriant curly hair seems alive About her other women and boy maidens Iud i Tsarévich near the bed lying on cushions

When the curtain rises music behind the stage is heard brittle as glass and someone singing]

Yai, matchberi amaleli yai
 Li samasama eryavani u

[*Very gradually string instruments and glasses and bells chime in.*]

Ivan

How much time has elapsed since I came here? Ten years? A hundred years? How can I tell?—I feel so strange here and everything remains strange to me. It is as though I had died, and were really in the world beyond.

Sometimes one recovers from the forgetfulness and one thinks many hours have passed by,—and sees that Yalya m who had been raising her hand up to her head is just dropping it. Or, again one thinks a moment only has passed by but the flowers that had been so fresh are already faded.

I myself have become as dull as a flower there is next to nothing left in me of the human. Happy? Unhappy? Once upon a time I was happy, and I quitted my happiness. And now—a dream a strange blue dream, which benumbs me.

Yalya attracts me for she is strange, and her scents intoxicate one. There is nothing human in her. It is as impossible not to stoop and smell the budding rose in the summer on Earth.

Yálya! Yálya! Unseal thy lips! Say something, if only in thine own tongue! Yálya! Yálya! Smile! Thou seest I smile Smile! It is like a seal, the red spot of her lips

[He gets up and approaches her]

Yálya-m I am putting my hand on thy luxuriant head My hand is heavy, Yálya-m, it is bowing thy head down, now look at me! Let, if only thine eyes, tell me, dost thou like me to touch thee, or is it unpleasant? The two dark eyes do not change

[He seizes her violently]

I have clasped thee to me Thou crackest in my embrace! I kiss, kiss that red seal! Become hot, ye red lips! Do thou embrace *[Casting her from him]* Doll!

[Yálya m again takes the pose of a sphinx]

Oh, you stupid beauty, Yálya-m,—listen to me! I will go away altogether! I will leave thee! Ngí! Ngí! Where is the interpreter?

[One of the boy maidens goes out]

Ivan

How shall I shatter the wall? Passion, possession, even birth, will not shatter the wall!

Ngí [enters]

What wilt thou, Lium Taize-Vevan?

Ivan

Tell thy queen I wish to go

There is no need *Ngí*

Tell her! *Ivan*

It is painful! *Ngí*

Iván

Tell her !

Ngí

Yálya-m, Liumi-Taize-Vevan ihuf-vau itulaki-ho

Yálya m [rising, almost throws herself back, wringing her hands and groaning] A-a, á a ! o-o, ó o !

Iván

She loves me ?

Ngí

Certainly she loves thee ! Everyone knows this
Thinkest thou she would have had thy daughter, did
she not love thee ? We have no slaves, as ye have—
we have only women

Iván

Why then is she wordless, smileless, kissless ?

Ngí

She is Yálya-m She does all these things But she
does it inside her heart

Iván

Yet, when I asked her questions, she deigned to dance
Tell her now, I ask her to dance

Ngí

Yálya-m, Liumi-Taize-Vevan melihuf-vau noyámí Yálya-
yayul-lyayál

Iván

Oh, is 'layúl-layál' 'to dance' ?

Ngí

It means to dance, Liumi-Taize

Iván

She will ?

Ngí

Thou seest

[All the suite quickly take up triangles and strange little drums and thin flutes, and one of them sings, whilst Yalya m raises herself closes her eyes and stands in the middle of the round carpet Without moving her legs she sways her body, arms and head]

The Song

Ai-Yalya-m-be
Ai-Lattya nga belem
Ten zeni-yai rru
Ten zeni zang belem

[She stops opens her eyes sets her hair straight with a wonderful gesture of her thin arm then quietly re assumes her favourite attitude Meantime while the same music proceeds a sturdy, pretty woman in linen dress holding a one-year old baby high above her head moves rhythmically surrounded by the Court towards the bed advancing and receding The minstrels sing more joyously and quickly]

The Song

Pong Yalya da-be,
Pong-Lattya-Ne belam,
Lyu zani u go
Lyu gniyi da-belem

[The people of the country all smile]

Ivan

What has happened ? What are you rejoicing at ?

The Woman with the Child [asks it]

Tiyi Yalya da mama ?

The Child

Mama

[They all smile]

Ngı

Thy daughter has to day said Mama She is a princess who has said it She is Yalya da Therefore we are glad

Ivan

And what does ' Mama ' mean in your language ?

Ng

The same as in yours

*The Woman with the Child [approaches the Princess and
says to the child]*

Tuki Yalya-ki-da . ma-ma

The Child

Ma-ma.

*[Then Yalya-m smiles All the birds are excited The flowers
open wider, the leaves rustle in the blue atmosphere The
others all clap their hands and open their little mouths in
one happy exclamation, 'Oh ' Ivan Tsarevich smiles with
the same very kindly smile]*

CURTAIN

SCENE X

[A room in Vasilisa's palace. At the back, a large mirror, with a curtain raised to the violet borders of it. Red candles in silver candlesticks burning beside it. Vasilisa sitting on a tripod beside the mirror, and anxiously looking into it, her golden hair over her shoulders, her hands loosely on her knees.]

Mamelfa [enters]

Thou seest, little lady, it is empty. It is only thy thin face thou seest there, and thy tremulous eyes. There is nothing else. He is gone.

Vasilisa

No, he is not dead. I have enquired everywhere. I asked even Marana, and he is not among the dead.

Mamelfa

Nor yet among the living.

Vasilisa

My thoughts cannot find his image. I have, in the darkness of thought, searched the seven worlds—and no one knows.

Mamelfa

Stop wondering, then! Cease loving!

Vasilisa

I can cease to live, but never to love. The seal has been set. My soul has been tinged for eternity with love to its last drop of blood. And this is well, for though he is not, love is, and the little Knight also is. I have Svetozár. Were it not for him, there were nought to keep me on earth. I would find wings, or even half wings, and fly away. I might be happy with the trolls and the nymphs, I might fly thither, but I must remain with Svetozar. He is sufficient for my happiness. So great is my little boy, that sometimes I grieve for Ivan and wonder—is it not a sin? Is not happiness passing thee by? Does not the voice of happiness echo here in the garden?

A Servant [running in]

Lady Vasilisa, Polosátik has arrived.

Vasilisa

Polosatík? This is a reproof to me, who am called wise, I was enquiring of everyone and forgot Polosatík. So little we think of little things. Bring him in! Bring him in!

[*Enter Polosatík. He is bowed and grey.*]

Vasilisa

Polosatík, dear friend, where is Iván the sweet Prince? Where didst thou leave him? What news does thou bear me of him?

Polosatík

Vasilisa, I never left Ivan, the sweet Prince! He, Ivan, left me in the distant Sahara and the shifting sands, forgot me,—deserted me.

Vasilisa

I forgot thee?

Polosatík

Well, what if he did? I am very little. But not only me. His harp, as well.

Vasilisa

Where is his harp?

Polosatík

I have it here.

Vasilisa

Give it to me! [*She takes the harp and presses it to her bosom.*] Tell me.

Polosatík

We went to sleep, and I woke up, and he was not there. But there was a fragrance around inexpressibly sweet. Has he been taken up to heaven?

PAUSE

I am tired. Let me only rest!

Vasilisa

Come,—wash, warm and feed and tend Polosátik. Put him to sleep on a feather bed. He is my friend, not my jester

[Kisses him on his brow.]

Polosátik

Lady, when I shall die my body will decay, but thy kiss shall rise from the grave like a beam of fire and kandle aloft with the stars

[He kisses her hand and goes out.]

Mamelfa

Give me the harp! What song of his shall I recall?
It shall be the first song he sang to thee

[She strikes the strings and sings.]

Whence, oh whence this golden shower, whence descends
it on me streaming?

Why, oh why, hath it thus happened, happiness of
long-drawn dreaming?

How shall I uphold this chalice? It is full to over-
flowing

Look! Look!

[The mirror shows Yalya n. s room the Queen herself in the attitude of a sphinx and Ivan looking at her little lips. Vasilisa quickly sweeps the curtain over the mirror.]

Mamelfa

Thou sawest it?

[Vasilisa says nothing.]

Mamelfa

He has betrayed thee?

Vasilisa

No

Mamelfa

He has betrayed thee. He loves another!

Vasilisa [in anguish]

He? He cannot, cannot love another!

Mámelfa

Console thyself! Forget him now! Be not anxious,
and I will think of him!

Vasilisa

Dare not to do him any harm!

Mámelfa

I will not do him any harm—but thou forget him!

Vasilisa

Leave me!

[Mámelfa goes out. Vasilisa throws the curtain back again, strikes the chords of the song again and the vision reappears. She looks long at Ydiya.]

Vasilisa

The flow ret is alive *[She looks at Ivan]* But thou art
a wrong doer! I see thy soul My pattern on it is
effaced Thou hast forgotten Vasilisa Thou has
forgotten Vasilisa for a childish fairy-tale *[In grief]*
Ivan the fool, Ivan the fool! Thou has riven the ring,
it cannot be welded again!

[She lets the curtain drop and sighs.]

Nurses attendants, bring me my little Knight

[A nurse brings in little Svetozar. He has a big helmet on his head and a big sword in his belt.]

Thy grandfather's helm and sword! Oh, my little
warrior, against whom art thou campaigning? Thou
wilt hurt somebody Dost thou wish to hurt some-
body?

Svetozar

I want to defend peoples, Mama

Vasilisa

But whom?

Svetozar

The dood peoples

Vasilisa [smiles]

And against whom ?

Svetozár

The naughty peoples who till them

Vasilisa

Who told thee this ?

Svetozár

I saw it my own self

Vasilisa

Where ?

Svetozar

Zhúka was beating his doggy Shakh

Vasilisa [seriously]

There will be work enough for thy sword all thy life long Do, Svetozar, defend the good ! Take thy helmet off and let me kiss thy face, my little treasure ! There is no sweeter blessing for thy mother's lips than to kiss thy face !

Svetozar [in her arms]

Mama, mama, dear mama !

[Kirbit has entered and looks on]

Kirbit

Daughter, dismiss thy suite ! I am come to speak with thee

Vasilisa

Do ye all go !

[They all go taking Svetozar with them]

Kirbit

I am come to speak with thee *[Pause]* Is Ivan no longer dear to thee ?

Vasilisa

I know not, but I can tell thee—I care not, though he have died

Kirbit

Thou art, then, widowed?

Vasilisa

Yes

Kirbit

Become the wife of Merodakh!

Vasilisa

I honour him, but I have had enough of the love of men
I have whom I may love otherwise

Kirbit

Not for thine own sake, shouldst thou marry him

Vasilisa

I will not serve another man in love,
For who am I? My own will,—not a slave!

Kirbit

But, ponder! For thyself thou canst be wife,
And for one other's sake yet not a husband's
Thou canst yet love another for his child

Vasilisa

I have my son

Kirbit

Yet listen, daughter, to me!
The world awaiteth Nature stirs to spring-time
A mighty spirit moves upon the earth!
For Merodakh begets a son called Mitra,—
Mitra, whom Vasilisa bears to him!
Shall any doubt or feeling or desire
Dare to obstruct the golden road of Being?

Vasilisa

But Svetozár?

Kirbit

I see him with his sword,
 Knight errant, golden locked, enter the world,
 And I see, leaning on his shoulder, Love—
 Aye, Love himself, in person come to earth
 But not for thee the higher powers to obey —
 Thou—thou art free, and nowhere shall be found—
 In heaven, on earth, or in the hells beneath—
 Any to sway thy will Yet thou must obey
 The holy Mitra must obey thy son,
 The Child Divine who here shall be conceived
 For at the gate of space there waiteth now
 The Long awaited

Vasilisa [bowing]

Be it so at thy will !

[⁴ *melodious majestic trumpet call The doors roll open Two Assyrian warriors sound golden trumpets two others lead enchained lions Outside there is a thunder of chariot wheels and a clash of many weapons*

Dignified with eyes like stars dark locks and black beard enter Merodakh Rammon in the guise of a Ninevean King Merodakh and Vasilisa the golden tressed and blue eyed stand facing each other she bears herself erect, in a dress of flaming red brocade]

Merodakh

Oh wondrous, beauteous maiden, all has been accom-
 plished !
 If I might only deem that thou wilt deign to love me
 I pray thee speak !
 But, it may be that thou canst only love the humble,
 I will be weak
 Or dost thou wish me as a young lamb to be gentle ?
 I will be meek
 Or if thou wilt, by my mysterious enchantment
 I should assume the form and shape of Iochanan,—
 I will obey
 For I, the King the demi god the great magician
 I, Merodakh-Rammon, when I see Vasilisa,
 Resign my sway

Vasilisa

I hail thee, father of our sovereign Mitra !

[Golden trumpets sound prolonged thunderous chords.]

CURTAIN

Kirbit

I see him with his sword,
 Knight-errant, golden-locked, enter the world,
 And I see leaning on his shoulder, Love—
 Aye, Love himself, in person come to earth
 But not for thee the higher powers to obey —
 Thou—thou art free, and nowhere shall be found—
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Merodakh

Oh, wondrous, beauteous maiden, all has been accomplished !

If I might only deem that thou wilt deign to love me

I pray thee speak !

But, it may be that thou canst only love the humble,

I will be weak

Or, dost thou wish me as a young lamb to be gentle ?

I will be meek

Or, if thou wilt, by my mysterious enchantment,

I should assume the form and shape of Iochanan,—

I will obey

For I, the King, the demi god, the great magician,

I Merodakh-Rammon, when I see Vasilisa

Resign my sway

VASILISA THE WISE

2

Vasilisa

I had thee, father of our sovereign Mitra !

[Golden trumpets sound prolonged thunderous chords]

CURTAIN

Kirbit

I see him with his sword,
 Knight-errant, golden-locked, enter the world
 And I see, leaning on his shoulder, Love—
 Aye, Love himself, in person come to earth
 But not for thee the higher powers to obey —
 Thou—thou art free, and nowhere shall be found—
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 I pray thee speak !

But, it may be that thou canst only love the humble,
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Or, dost thou wish me as a young lamb to be gentle ?
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Or, if thou wilt, by my mysterious enchantment,
 I should assume the form and shape of Iochanan,—
 I will obey

For I, the King the demi god the great magician,
 I Merodakh Rammon when I see Vasilisa,
 Resign my sway

Vasilisa

I hail thee, father of our sovereign Mitra !

[Golden trumpets sound prolonged thunderous chords]

CURTAIN

SCENE XI

[Room in Yalya m's palace The same decoration as before
Yalya in the the same attitude but near her Yalya da playing
in her cradle Ivdn asleep on cushions and very many flowers
around him]

Voices [from behind, far off]

Pong Tanzei

Voices [from behind, nearer]

Pong Tanzei

Ngí [enters]

Yalya m, Taize iluf be

[Mamelfa enters with 1 or basket on a yoke she is accompanied
all the way by a red ray crossing the motionless soft blue of
Va u]

Mamelfa

Oh—how wonderful! What places one can travel to
nowadays! Oh! But who is he? He belongs to us,
not to you

Ngí

He is Taize-Vevan, the husband of our Queen He
came from the land of Rgarg So too have you, I think?

Mamelfa

Where is your Queen? Ah, I see, I see! She is indeed
beauteous! I bow to the earth to thee, Queen Yálya!
Wouldst thou not like some rosy apples from Earth?
I was told ye had no apples Please ask the Queen,
may I offer her some fruit?

Ngí

Yálya m Taize de, biya haargarga-bombi?

[Yálya m sits up and nods her head]

Mámelfa [opening the basket]

Here they are apples ruddy as your sun! This is the
finest of them Taste it!

[Yálya accepts the apple and smiles She takes it claps her hands
and says]

She throws the apple into the air and catches it. Then she turns to the child and gives her the apple. The child turns it round in her hands and carries it up to her mouth. Yalya quickly takes the apple away. She plays with it in front of the child and suddenly bites it. She immediately rises becom es erect straight as a cord and falls down as if stricken. A moment of silence. Mamelisa crumples up like a spider, her hands in her basket.

The Moon people approach the bed on tiptoe on all sides. One of them touches Yalya's hand and utters a shrill and despairing cry of

Mga !

The cry is taken up by all present. Mga ! Mga ! The flowers shivel the leaves droop the birds flutter the fountains stop.

Ivan [awakening]

What strange cries ! Oh I have been asleep ! I was nowhere and—where am I now ? Oh yes in Ae-va ú Who is shouting and crying ? *[He springs to his feet]* What has happened ?

[Mamelisa rises takes up the basket of accursed apples and flings it with all her might into the depths of the scene. A terrible explosion the blue world bursts asunder a vast precipice becomes visible a black abyss with sharp crags. Loud cries of

Mga !

The Moon people take up the dead Princess and carry her away anxiously and hurriedly. Mamelisa leaves hastily wrapping herself in a black cloak. Ivan rubs his eyes.]

Ivan

What has happened ? What has happened ? I am trembling all over. My teeth are chattering.

[The blue black and silver curtain drops. A dim sound of singing is heard from behind the curtain and from time to time a horrible rasping of iron. The curtain rises. Burning torches pass across the stage suspended in double file and pass beyond sinking lower and lower beyond the broken crags into the black abyss. A procession marches at a slow pace in the same direction. In the first rank come the leaders of Va u in blue armour and plumed helmets thick set men looking like crabs. The heads of their lances gleam. They march with a heavy tread onward into the gulf into the black void. They are followed by tall women in light blue shrouds carrying the coffin of Yalya in which glitters with moving colours sparks and

Iván

What have I remembered ?

Two-fold the links,
The links are welded,
Reaching the Emerald Star on high
Trust me, though our ways are nought but
desperate,
Those on the Road shall never more die

*[The vision of Vasilisa vanishes, but the Emerald Star shines
brightly over the abyss]*

Iván

Daughter, let us go hence, let us go seek a road to
Vasilisa Thither there is no road ! To her heart there
is no road ! Where shall be my home or a shelter for
me ? The grave, or my own country ! What has
become of me ? I am wretched, I am an orphan
Forgive me, Vasilisa, forgive me !—But my daughter, I
will not abandon her Yálya-da, Yálya-da, thou criest ?
I also am crying, little Yálya da !

[He goes stumbling into the darkness, not knowing where]

CURTAIN

Rra! h m-ne-gugulimm-reddai,
Zhdai num gugulimm hagadzan
Mga!

[At this last cry a ghastly rustling of robes]

Yafi-savava ravvai, reddai
Zhdai ugrufu, ravvai-hagadzan
Mga!

[The coffin is let into the grave and plunges into the abyss of the black void the rest follow down to the end of the procession. The last couple of boy and maidens disappear, wringing their hands crying]

Mga! Mga!

Then the torches go out one after another and the stage becomes dark]

Ivan [at the front of the stage, as pale as chalk, but his face lit by some strange beacon of light]

Mga! Mga! That means death. Everything has been destroyed and has perished here. My little girl, my poor little one, let us follow Mama! [He takes her by the hands and raises her high above his head] Some madness has seized me. I go to meet death face to face. No, those torches cannot light our path.

Now on the road accursed we will go
Hell's mouth is gaping for us there below
Hail Death!

Now say farewell, there is nought to fulfil,
Better our destruction than insolent ill—
Hail Death!

[He goes to the edge of the precipice. At the very edge the image of Vasilisa arises with a warning gesture. Ivan steps back in even greater confusion.]

Iván

What have I remembered ?

Two-fold the links,
The links are welded,
Reaching the Emerald Star on high
Trust me, though our ways are nought but
desperate,
Those on the Road shall never more die.

*[The vision of Vasilisa vanishes, but the Emerald Star shines
brightly over the abyss]*

Iván

Daughter, let us go hence, let us go seek a road to
Vasilisa. Thither there is no road ! To her heart there
is no road ! Where shall be my home or a shelter for
me ? The grave, or my own country ! What has
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Forgive me, Vasilisa, forgive me !—But my daughter, I
will not abandon her Yálya-da, Yálya-da, thou criest ?
I also am crying, little Yálya-da !

[He goes stumbling into the darkness, not knowing where]

CURTAIN

SCENE XII

[*A boundless yellow desert of sand. An ass too tired to move. On the ass on one side a pack on the other a basket in which Yalya da now two years old is sitting. Iudin looking older with a long beard and an Arab burnus walking leaning on a big staff.*]

Ivan

The beast is weary, and even tide draws nigh
The sun that scorched us, all day merciless,
Is tranquil now, and his slant beams but graze
The waves of this great sea of sand and merge
A yellow shadow into the vast blue
Around me. So let us rest awhile here

[*He slowly unloads the ass. He plants a post and makes a primitive tent under the shadow of which he puts the basket with the child. The ass stands dolefully by. Iudin throws it a handful of dry grass.*]

Ivan

Was I not told it was but one day's journey
To where the Northern caravans set forth?
Three days we now have travelled so may-be
Have lost our way. Then we shall perish? No,
Perish we cannot! This I will not believe,—
Nought will I e'er believe but death itself,
Which can and may pronounce the baleful No
Till then we will fight on—Was that a sound?
A bell? Aye, a bell it was. Nor far from here
My caravans

[*Listens.*]

The sound—it now seems nearer

[*Makes a speaking trumpet of his hands.*]

Hallo, hallo!

[*Answering shouts of Hallo! Hallo!*]

Iudin

They answer and draw nigh

He steps back a little way to meet them and looks round. Three travellers with long shepherd's crooks enter: one an old man one middle aged the third a youth.

Second Traveller

I understand then thou art not
 Mean souled but thy mind is curious thy spirit
 Restless Yet of all lands on earth more strange
 More marvellous than Dark Russia is none
 Thence streams the light There rules the wondrous
 Tsar

And his most wondrous Queen to whom is born
 As we the Magi and Chaldeans trow
 Mitra who is on earth the god incarnate

Ivan

What Tsar is it holds sway now o'er this Dark Russia?
 Has then the old Tsar Funduk died?

Eldesl Traveller

Not dead
 But slumbering in peace departing hence
 And like the sun to earth there has come down
 To Russia Rammon Merodakh Kaldu

Ivan

Whence came to rule my native land a prince
 So mighty? From the East as conqueror
 To he v a passage to the throne?

Second Traveller

Not thus —
 Funduk himself surrendered his own throne
 To Merodakh his sons went their own way —
 For who durst argue with the all wise demi god
 In whom in heaviest hour of invasion's stress
 The only refuge then appeared? Merodakh
 Came down to them obeying Heaven's will
 Who gave the Star to him to be his wife
 For as there shines beside Shamash Baal
 The Sun god beauteous Ishtar at the morn
 So doth the sovereign empress Vasilisa
 Fill all the world with softest sweetest light

SCENE XIII

[Garden in Vasilisa's palace By the pond at night In d' Tsarevich sits in a ragged dress by the water edge]

Ivan

Two years two years have now passed by since I returned I have not dared to look on her I am held back by some iron hand She is happy and I am an evil doer I serve as a shepherd in my father's house and thus I keep my beautiful little daughter lovely as a fairy tale Thus I live and still somehow I hope for something I have only seen her twice Once with the King on a lofty chariot They are a noble pair Anyone who sees them carries away in his heart a reverend joy The other time in a field by herself Whither was she going? Her eyes were half closed in thought How my heart throbbed! How I yearned to cast myself at her feet! But some invisible iron hand bent me to the ground held me firmly down The wind is blowing it is cold

I wander like one of the damned I seek something on the way and I know what I am seeking It will soon be dawn There I see a streak of light to the East kindling [Leaps to his feet] Stop Ivan remember! This is the very place

Look around thee! Thou seest—the dawn has kindled with a streak of light to the East seest thou those grey clouds? Now the pond is turning a cold steel blue Now that bush is silently rustling

Thou hearest a shepherd far away plays on his pipes and the birds are chirruping here and there as they list Remember every moment may be an eternity every moment may be a seal At this moment our love in this life has been sealed and in all lives to come [He sobs silently]

Merodach

Stop! Who is thus sobbing her?

Indr

This is a marvel! I shudder as though fever-stricken
My eyes are full of tear of terror and joy Will some
thing happen?

[*Indr* is silent]

Servant

Where are you? I have been searching high and low
for you! The little girl told me you were wandering
in the garden Come! King Seredin is calling for
you He'll tear you to shreds!

Indr

What for?

Servant

He asks no questions he is Seredin It would be
better did he hit you outright for when he starts using
the sharpness of his tongue there is nothing more to be
said

Indr

I will go but I will fetch my daughter She has woken
up and is frightened when she is alone for she is
always with me

[*They go out*]

CURTAIN

Svetozár

Whom do you belong to ?

Yalya da

My papa herds your cows

Svetozar

Oh does he ? Will he let you come and play with us ?

Yalya da

Yes, he will

Svetozár

And will Mama ?

Yalya da

My Mama is a Princess of the Moon She died She went into the night She was even prettier than me. She never said anything but only danced She loved papa loved me bit an apple and *Mga*--she died Papa has told me about her

Svetozar

You hear Mitrik ? It's just like a fairy tale Well now I love you little girl What is your name ?

Yalya da

Yalya da

Svetozar

Yalya dew berry ! My little strawberry, I take you by your little ears and kiss your eyes Tell me doesn't anyone anyone hurt you ? I am a Knight and am under a vow to defend the weak

Yalya da

No one ever hurts me Who is your mama ?

Svetozar

My mama ? My mama is Vasilisa There is one sun in the heavens and one Vasilisa on earth My mama is the queen of all mamas

Yalya-da

Is she pretty? Is she alive? Does she pet you?

Svetozar

Yes, she does

Yalya-da [turning to *Mitra*]

And him, too?

Svetozar

Him, too

Yalya da

Which does she pet more?

Mitra

Him, but then, too, I love him more than myself

Yalya da

Oh, but . . . and your papa?

Svetozar

We have different papas. My papa is Ivan Tsarevich, a splendid brave knight—and so kind! He went away and vanished, but I think he will come back—Oh, come back, do, daddy! I want to show you how well I can ride and how far I can shoot with my bow.

Yalya da

What do you mean? One mama and two papas?

Svetozar

Yes, of course. Mine went away and his arrived.

Mitra

His papa will arrive and mine will go away.

Svetozar

No. I really do love his papa—he is strong, handsome, and wiser than anybody else on earth. And he loves me—he pats me on the head and lets me have a ride on his horse. For Tsar Murduk I would lay down my head and die.

Yálya-da

Will you take me as your little sister ?

Svetozar

Will you be my bride ? Will you ? How I shall love you ! No one shall ever touch you Will you ?

Yálya da

Your sister

Svetozar

If you like then, my sister You must stay with us for ever My name is Svetozar his Mitra I go in front of him and prepare the way for him, and he follows me Mitrenka, my light, my little golden sun, my Mitrik, my little God ! For Mitrenka, my little brother, I would lay down my valorous head and die !

Mitra

Svetozar, tell us a story the first that comes into your head !

Svetozar

I will, Mitra, I will

Little Yálya was walking in the garden Suddenly from somewhere or other there comes the Loathly Worm You know how red he is like a hot stove, and his yellow eyes, like a cat's, but as big as a dinner plate He brandishes his scaly tail, snaps the trees, and says, 'I'll eat Yálya up' And she cries ! Svetozar, the hero-knight, hears her shrieks He was still quite young, only eight years old, but he snatched up the sword of his step father, Merodakh the Tsar, rushed into the garden and attacked the dragon And the dragon takes to his heels—ha ha ha !—and curls his tail like a dog between his hind legs But Svetozar slashes him in the back with his sabre He didn't want to kill him, he felt sorry for him The dragon sat up hisses covers up his eyes under his brows, and squeaks out, 'Spare my life !' And so it all turns out a joke And that's the end of my story.

Mitra

A fine story too ! Now, Yalya tell us a story The first that comes into your head !

Yalya da

Once upon a time there was a little blue girl Ever so little At night she got into a big flower and the flower rocked and she went to sleep At dawn a little sunbeam flew up to her and said Tk tk tk —time to wake up ! The little girl got out sat on a butterfly and flew away The butterfly flies and flies and flies ever so far Where ? I don't know What is over there ? The little girl flew away ever so far on the butterfly and never came back

Mitra

A fine story !

Svetovar

I would have followed on a horse and found her too !

is easier for me to endure than for all of them to be tormented' The Tsar grew very angry at this 'What you sly-boots, trying to get the better of me!'—and he started tormenting him and left off tormenting the others He tormented him, and said, 'Now if you would rather, I will leave off tormenting you, and will torment the others No, I would rather not' Then the naughty Tsar wept and said 'You are good Will you forgive me?' And the little boy forgave him And then the music began to play

[*Suetosar weeps Yalya da looks in front of her thinking ! silence Vasilisa, pensive, comes down the steps She stops and looks around*]

Vasilisa

What is it in me is happening?
Why is it my secret craft faileth?
What is it now hurls my keenness,
Blurs my vision of the distant?
But my heart is all on fire,
And my heart is torn asunder!

PAUSE

Why is it the sun is dimmer?
Why are all the flowers odourless?
Into my soul afar and faintly
Why is it that sounds are wafted?
Surely I live happily on earth!
He is kind to me none nobler,
He is kind to me and loves me!
My desires are granted instantly,
All things smile to me, as to the morning
And have I so few rare jewels?
My two treasures are incomparable,
One a childlike heart so ardent,—
And another heart ineffable

PAUSE

Woe is me, but stolen and taken
From my soul is the heart's necessity,
What the heart needs and desires
Thief, return me my lost treasure!

Years go by and youth is fading,
Life approacheth the autumn tide
And my bosom yearns for embraces,—
Whose?—Yes, No one's—the Unforgotten
I forbade myself forgetfulness,
And my memory is a torment
I had one love unreplaceable,
Of that love I enjoyed so little
From my soul a thief hath stolen
What my heart needs and desires
Thief return me my lost treasure!
Oh return the unreplaceable!

Svetozar

Mama dear, thou art singing very sadly

Vasilisa

Ah here you are, children! Who is that with you?

[Approaches her and looks at her startled]

Whose little girl is it?

[Takes her and leads her away]

Oh whose child is she?

Let me look into thine eyes! These are not earthly
forces Who art thou?

How my heart beats, rends my bosom ! Children, would that I might perish ! Glistening on thy raven tresses, Vasilisa's tears are streaming, like bright diamonds they hang there.

Mitra

I know now !

Svetozár

What do you know ?

Mitra

I've guessed it !

Svetozár

What ?

Mitra [to Vasilisa]

Mama, I will tell you. You must own up

Vasilisa

Well, my heavenly sunbeam, tell me !

Mitra

The papa of Yalya who herds our cows is the papa of Svetozár

Svetozár

Ho-ho ho—what ? What are you making up ? Stories or is it true ? Tell me !

Mitra

You love him, wait for him, Mama Vasilisa, and he is come

Vasilisa

Mitra, Mitra, Mitra, my little boy !

Mitra

You love him more than my papa. We will not be angry, mama. You love Svetozár more than Mitra, I also love him better. Do not weep. He who herds our cows—him one must love very deeply. He is here, he is thin, he is afraid, he is wrinkled,—love him !

My papa will not be angry I also want you to give all your love to Svetozar Mama, if he is sad, you must pet him for pain is very painful to him I love him If you find it hard to love him very much, to love him and his papa, and to love me as well and my papa then do not love us at all Mama We will not cry We will not be angry We will be merry Mama! Svetozar and Yalya, let's go and play!

[He leads the children away Svetozar moves away slowly looking at Mitra and asking him some question but little Mitra goes ahead taking the others by the hand up the steps The children go out]

Vasilisa

And it is I who cast the first shadow on Mitra's soul! He must suffer, and it is I his throne and his root who first torment him! But in Rammon and the son of Rammon suffering flowers into a marvellous blossom Ivan is coming! He is coming!

[Enter Iván and Seredín]

Seredín

Here you have your wages! A man who doesn't sleep at nights doesn't work by day The night was made for sleep, the day for work Our time was not allotted to us for roystering and mooning So let's see no more of you! Men must be men and masters masters Any half and half sort is superfluous —might even be a thief! Off you go!

Vasilisa

Ivan, come to me

[Ivan ascends slowly up the steps]

Ivan [stumbles on a step]

No,—I cannot

Vasilisa

Ivan!

[Ivan gets up moves again, and again falls down and sobs]

Vasilisa [raising him up]

What is there to forgive? Thou art mine and I am thine

[Ivan sobs]

Vasilisa [embracing him]

My joy! My eldest son! Vanished, returned
I hunger for thee! I had no bread and they gave me
precious stones for food

Ivan

Vasilisa, let me weep—only weep! By my tears let
me absolve myself!

[Merodakh slowly comes down the steps from above]

Vasilisa [not noticing Merodakh]

Weep, Ivanushka weep, my heart's own, if the heart
wish to weep! But thou hast naught to repine at I
have nothing to forgive thee Thou hast nothing to
forgive me

Two-fold the links the links are welded,
Now we separate, now we unite again,
Now we are parted now we embrace again,
Or we are cast on strands far distant,
Yet after æons we meet again

Merodakh

Queen!

Vasilisa

King Rammon!

Merodakh

To Iochánan's heart thou now returnest

Vasilisa

He has returned to my heart, Merodakh

Merodakh

The cycle is fulfilled, my bliss is gone

Vasilisa

I have fulfilled my duty Mitra lives

Merodakh

Give me thy hand, place thy hand on my heart

Vasilisa [touching his heart]

Oh, Merodakh my friend what pain is thine !

Merodakh

Thou understandest Yet even sevenfold
The pain thy son, bright Mitra, has to brook
In life With both my hands, I shall hold back
My heart henceforth for now I cannot stay
With you so to the Fathers I return

Vasilisa

Yea Merodakh, depart I venerate
In thee the husband's strength and majesty
Of grief Give thou my brow the hallowed kiss

[He ascends. The palace above the steps is transformed. Blinding beams of light pour downward. Golden trumpets resound in chords. The Heavens are revealed. Gigantic golden thrones are seen and on them the outline of the great gods at the threshold. Ishtar titanic who smiles eternally. She offers a goblet. Mero Idkh, advancing expands to titanic stature. He embraces and kisses his sister. The gods drawing close together yield him his place. The Heavens are then withdrawn from view. Only the echoremnans rumbling over the shaken earth.]

Ivan and Vasilisa are standing on either side of the lowest step bowed down. When the last echo has rumbled away, the palace is seen as before at the top of the steps. The door opens, the three children enter and descend. Svetozar is leading bearing a sword in front of him and behind follows Ultra who looks into the distance.]

Vasilisa

Whither are ye going, children?

Svetozar

On to the earth. We are going to defend the good folk from the evil. That is our game, Mama.

Vasilisa

Ivan how wonderful the children are—all the children—thine and mine! Is it not so, Ivan? I have long since thought, but now I understand—we must live for the children, we must serve the children.

Ivan

I saw them a long time ago Vasilisa. Once I was sitting in the garden bemused and suddenly the earth parted from under me, and a blue abyss opened out. There I saw two little children's hands beckoning—one light haired with dancing eyes—charming—and the other with black locks and big eyes. And somebody spoke to my heart saying These are thy son and thy daughter! And gazing even deeper I saw behind them a wondrous angel like this little boy full of thought and I beheld a green Star over their heads. It was then, also I saw thee, Vasilisa.

Vasilisa

We must live for children! We must love for children! The race of man will be wise and happy, when children

live for joy and the elders live for children Then we
shall go forward ! At the height of my earthly wisdom
I understand this

Ivan

The children go on Ye of the future be ye
blessed !

Vasilisa

Ivan didst thou see the Heavens revealed ?

Ivan

I dared not raise my eyes

Vasilisa

Verily verily I say unto thee Heaven for the gods but
the Earth for children

Ivan

This is the language of mankind's autumn

Vasilisa

A season wise and ripe the season of golden fruits

Ivan

And Yalya did not die she had children and prevails
over death

Vasilisa

Everyone who serves children is immortal

Ivan

Look Vasilisa how the unbeams light up Mitra !
How beautiful he is ! He raises to the sun his hands !

Vasilisa

And man's divinity on earth shall be the child